

Sussex Miniature Locomotive Society Ltd

Issue No. 443
February 2020

BEECH HURST NEWS



Cover picture: -

Sad News: It is with regret to open 2020 with the sad news that long time SMLS member Jack Pitt passed away on 30th January. He will be missed by all those who knew him and is pictured above enjoying a train ride in March 2010 with one of his Pekinese dogs Katie...

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Editor's Notes

I start this latest edition with the very sad news that long time member Jack Pitt passed away on 30th January. Jack joined SMLS in 1968 and was a regular attendee until more recent times when his visits to Beech Hurst were a little more sporadic. He was a very kind and generous person, and someone who was always willing to give encouragement and good advice. When I first joined SMLS in the early 90's, Jack had just retired as a driver for British Railways and came to Beech Hurst almost every weekend in his white Fiat Panda car! At that time he owned and would regularly drive a 5" gauge Class 08, as well as occasionally driving steam locomotives too. For our 60th anniversary, Jack very kindly built and donated a guard's van to the club. This was the first of 5 items of rolling stock to be constructed by Jack and then donated to the club. It was Jack's enthusiasm to build and then generosity to donate these wagons that ultimately gave me the inspiration to move into the world of rolling stock and for that Jack I will be forever grateful. More recently another Class 08 and a driving truck have been donated to the club, the former being used as a regular passenger hauling loco. Jack also loved Pekinese dogs and during the past 20 or so years has kept 3 different animals. One of those was Katie, who will forever be remembered for her real character and who loved nothing more than a piece of cod (Jack only got the batter and chips) on a Saturday evening! Jack will be missed by all those who knew him and thank you for your generosity, good advice and happy memories...

The February issue marks the start of a new decade and perhaps a new chapter for SMLS. I have held this edition back a couple of weeks to allow more time in between my work schedule and to include the latest 'Positions' list of which there have been significant changes from 2019. As the club closes in on its 70th year, I for one am hopeful that a fresh and younger committee can take the club forward in a very positive way and lay a platform for generations of members to come. We are hugely fortunate to have a solid base of younger members and with the right encouragement and nurturing they will hopefully volunteer for decades to come and become the role models and tutors of the future generations.

From the last edition, I must start by thanking Andrew S, Chris S, Graham Miller, Roy P & Sam C for their articles and photographs, in what was a bumper edition! This time I have included a revised 'Officers, Committee & Positions' list for 2020, an obituary for Jack Pitt, courtesy of Ray, a copy of a very interesting article that Jack wrote for this newsletter in 1987, a report from our display at Alexandra Palace and a short update on Winter Work. In addition, there is a full Diary, **updated to include details of postponements due to Coronavirus**, but including events through the summer, so please read on and enjoy...

Andrew B

Chairman's Notes

I have received the honour and privilege of being voted on as your Chairman for the coming year and I will do my very best to ensure that I meet your expectations.

Firstly, I would like to add my thanks, along with those of Andrew S' given at the AGM, to Nick Edwards, Dan Evans, Mike Porter & Geoff West for the considerable support they have given over the many years they have been with the club and I look forward to working with them in the future.

I take over this role at a challenging time with the Coronavirus (Covid-19) entering our lives in a big way. At the time of writing the government has just announced their guidelines for 'social distancing' which includes clubs and friends, and my inbox is full of cancelled activities and events.

The government has issued guidelines that we should not be meeting for social activities and to ignore this would be foolish and arrogant on our part.

The committee has therefore made the decision to follow those guidelines and to **CLOSE THE CLUB with immediate effect for the foreseeable future.**

This obviously means we will not be opening at Easter and notices to that effect will be put on our website and Facebook page.

Be sensible and be guided by the government's daily advice and stay safe. No one will be penalised for staying away.

We will be setting up a team of people to carry out periodic checks of the building and we will also be consulting the crime prevention and fire safety teams for advice on how we can increase the security of the building during this time.

Please note, it has been brought to the attention of the committee that the workshop power machinery has been used during the week and the member doing so has not signed in. This is a serious breach of club rules, as well as Health & Safety guidelines and must stop.

I am able to confirm that the committee has agreed to move forward with the repairing of the roof with quotes and planning permission being sought. It has also been agreed that the toilet needs upgrading so it is 'accessible-for-all' with an immediate re-hanging of the existing door so that it opens outwards in line with current recommendations.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any concerns during this current crisis and with any thoughts and ideas that you may have that would benefit the club using the following email address: mike.wakeling@btinternet.com or by mobile: 07921819724.

We will be sending out regular bulletins to keep you informed of current thinking. I hope to catch up with you all over the coming months as soon as things get back to normal. Keep well...

Mike W

Election of 'Officers' and 'Other' Positions for 2020

At the first Committee meeting following the AGM, members are elected to fill the 'Officer's' & other 'Working' positions within the Club, this list is for 2020:

President: Ray Parsons

Vice-Presidents: Geoff West & John West

Chairman: Mike Wakeling

Vice-Chairman: John Baldwin

Secretary: Andrew Strongitharm

Minutes Secretary: Andrew Brock

Treasurer: Graham Miller

Other Committee Members in Addition to the Above Officer's:

Tom Broome, Adam Cro, Harry Shopland & Steve Steer

Operations Managers: Tom Broome & Andrew Strongitharm

Assistance Operations Manager: Sam Hope

Signals Engineer: Graham Mundy

Assistant Signals: Vacant

Workshop Manager: Mike Wakeling

Assistant Workshop: Steve Steer

House Manager: Mike Wakeling

Catering Manager: Lorema Wakeling

Stores Managers: Nick Edwards, Steve Steer & Geoff West

Librarian: Stephen Hutton

Assistant Librarians: Ray Parsons & Geoff West

Newsletter Editor: Andrew Brock

Boiler Consultant: John Richardson

Boiler Coordinator: Steve Turner

Boiler Inspectors: Mike Porter, John Richardson, Steve Turner & Geoff West

Custodians of Wharfedale: Nick Edwards & Daniel Evans

Assistant Custodian: Sam Ridley

Custodian of LNER Tank: Mike Porter & Steve Steer

Custodian of Club Electric Locomotives: Sam Hope

Club Electric Locomotives (Technical): Graham Mundy

Carriage Valeters: Sam Hope, Graham Mundy & Sam Ridley

Webmaster: Andrew Strongitharm

Clubhouse Cleaners: Tom Broome & Dan Evans

Track Manager / Maintenance: Roy Preston

Truck Manager / Maintenance: Andrew Brock

Exhibition Coordinators: John Baldwin, Andrew B, Andrew S & Mike Wakeling

Facebook Administrators: Tom Broome, Adam Cro, Nick Edwards & Andrew S

Disciplinary Sub-Committee: John Baldwin, Chris Saunders & Mike Wakeling

Data Production Coordinator: John Baldwin

Person of Significant Control (for Companies House Register): Andrew S

Any changes to the above will be communicated through the newsletter.

Committee

Jack Pitt

When Jack joined the club in 1968 we gained another professional railwayman who fired and drove steam locomotives from Horsham depot and subsequently became an electric train driver (not motorman) who was only too pleased to guide any club member who wished to learn the niceties of railway operation, such as signal aspects, braking distances, etc... He particularly liked discussing the position of steam valves in relation to their respective pistons (I learned a lot). At the time before he started railway modelling, Jack delighted in making scale model farm carts, hay wagons, and the like, in many cases putting a suitable sized china horse between the shafts complete with suitable harness. These showed Jack's skill and patience in getting a first class finish on wood and paintwork, which he continued to practice on all his models. One of the largest of these carts complete with china horse but having lost its harness now resides on a shelf above the deserts counter at the Old Tollgate restaurant in Bramber (if you visit have a good look).

Subsequently, Jack has built various 5" gauge locomotives and wagons, many of which he presented to the club and are still in use as regular members will know. **(Picture below:** Class 08, driving car, 3 wagons and guard's van Jack donated).



He also produced several working model boats which we took to local rallies, along with some of mine, such as at Beal Park, Fareham, Southwater and even on the river Arun by Houghton Bridge tea gardens; a place he regularly visited with his friend Jean Hills.

On a completely different scale, when his grandchildren reached a suitable age, he made them some sit on and ride wooden models such as lorries and railway engines.

During his later years when Jack was physically unable to assist in running the railway, he still enjoyed regular visits and walking his Pekinese dogs in the park. In return for the welcome and assistance he received from members, Jack presented us with 2 battery electric locomotives, 4 goods wagons & guard's van. I'm sure that all who have known him at Beech Hurst will long remember him.



Ray

Ed No: The next 5 pages are an article by Jack from the August 1987 news...

PUSH AND PULL TRAINS

Recently whilst chatting to Mike he asked if I could put some notes together for the News on those little push and pull trains that were so much a part of life not so long ago. Whether it will be close enough to be regarded as a true record I doubt as it has been some 27 years since I last worked on this type of train and the cobwebs of time have clouded my memory just a little, never the less let's ease the dust and cobwebs back to see what I can come up with.

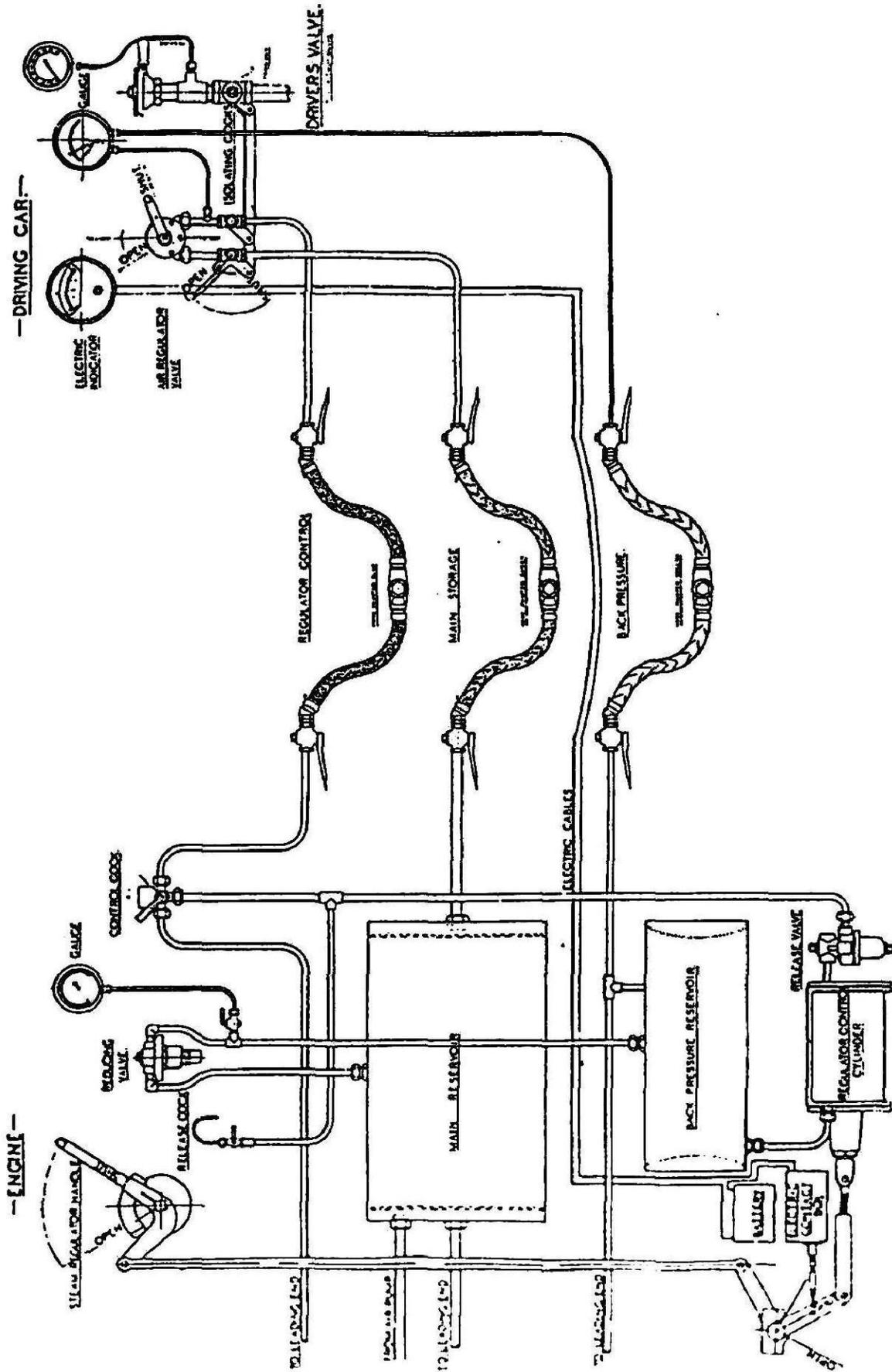
As you will have gathered by now most of my steam days was spent working on small tank engines mainly E4s, E5s, E5Xs, D1s, D3s, and M7s. The last three in the list were engines that were fitted for push and pull work that meant that when these engines were attached to the appropriate coaching stock, the driver could drive from either end of the train having full control of the regulator, brake and the air operated whistle at the car end. Most of the time our trains were formed of an engine, 2 coaches and a van but in the mornings and evenings some trains were called business trains and these had coaches on both end of the engine. The people travelling then seemed to be happier than they are today. It was always a nice sight to see a cluster of people standing round the fire at the base of a water column on a cold winter's day waiting for our train to arrive. At Steyning Station there was one gentleman who would always pass the chain to us as we hopped up onto the tank to top up with water.

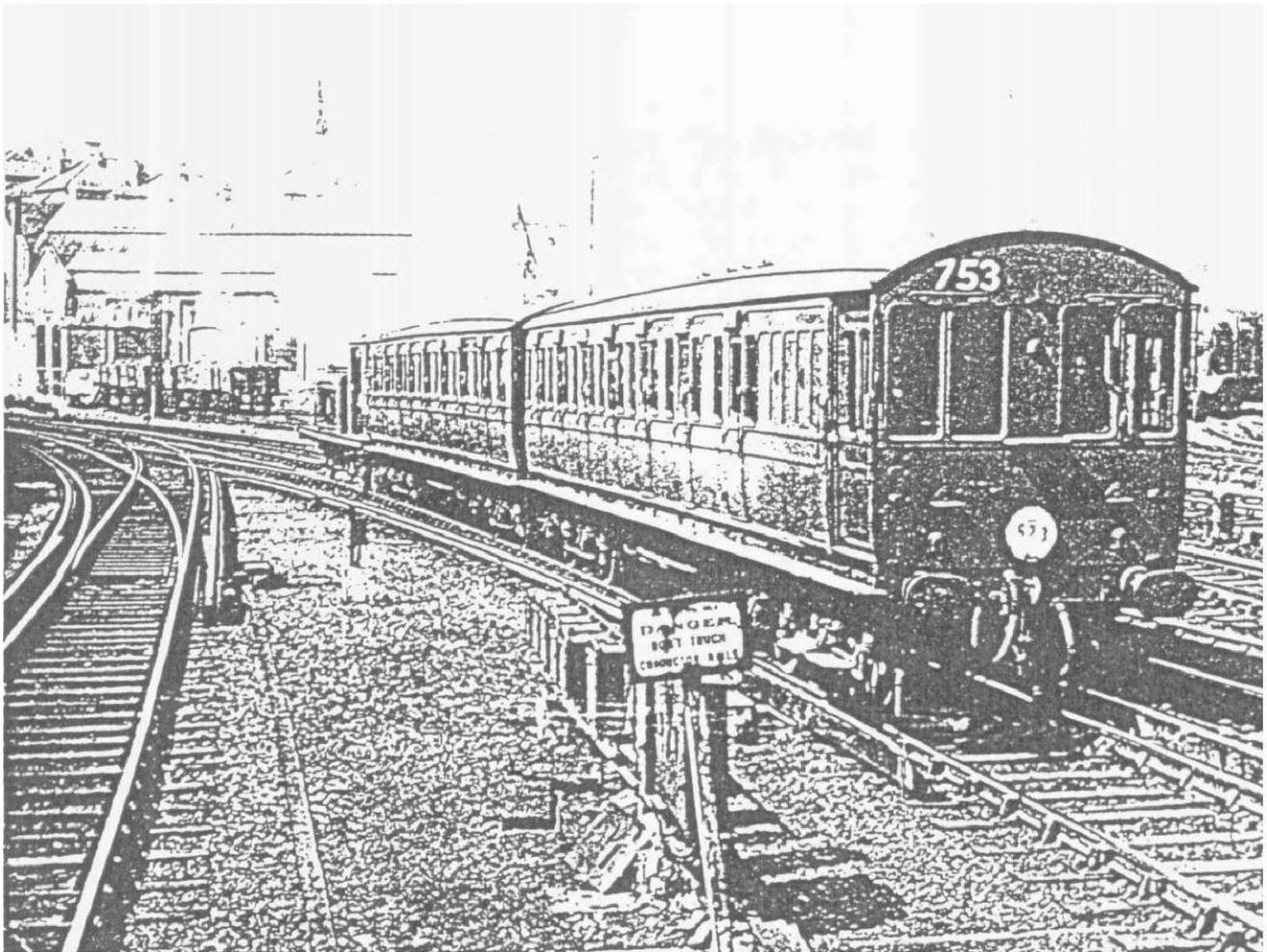
Stop day dreaming, Jack, and get back to how push and pull trains worked. Apart from the usual screw coupling, vacuum pipe and steam heat pipe, these trains had 3 extra pipes which had air supplied to them through the westinghouse compressed air system. Those pipes were the main air supply, the regulator control and the back pressure. There was also an electric lead and an earth wire to allow a bell code to be used between the engine and car end. The regulator system was also wired up to the car end so that the driver would know exactly where it was set (well, to within a foot or so), that's why the fireman on the engine always had to be ready to wind the reverser up into mid gear and beyond at times to keep the engine under control. There were the odd times when we would get caught unaware and the regulator would touch second valve and ending up by going right over to the full open position with no quick way of closing it. Even by opening the regulator control cock on the engine it took a little time. When this happened the engine invariably picked up its water and possibly stopping its donkey pump from working - as swift clout with the coal hammer would start the donkey again but I'm afraid there wasn't much I could do about those black spotted polka dot dresses and shirts that seem to appear from nowhere.

Now if the trip that we were about to do was to be done car first, there was several things the driver had to do. Before leaving the engine and going to the car and he would set the lever in the direction of travel, create the vacuum brake, placing the handle in running position, moving the westinghouse brake handle from release to . . . position, open the jackson combination brake valve and then after making sure everything was alright he would connect the regulator and control rod up

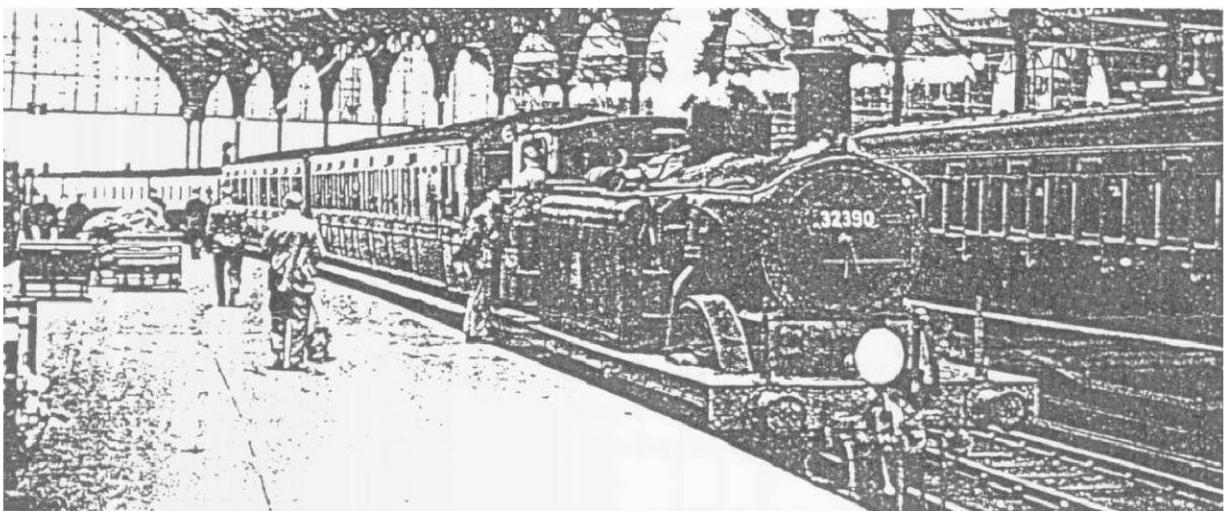
DIAGRAM OF MOTOR ENGINE AND DRIVING CAR

Usual screw coupling, vacuum pipe and steam heat pipe have been omitted





D3 0-4-4T No.32390 propels an ex LBSC motor train into Brighton platform 2 from Horsham in 1953. Note the engine headcode disc, with duty number on 623. The driver sitting on the right hand side of the coach. The motive power depot being to the right of the picture while directly behind the front coach would be the coal road and coal stage with cranes, turntable and out road.



No.32390, the last survivor of a class of 36 locomotives, has brought a motor set from Horsham a few minutes earlier and is standing at platform 2, summer of 1955, awaiting another loco to come on and take the train back to Horsham. Note the dog - I wonder which train he be travelling by.

Having done all that he would then go to the car end to prepare and test everything that end, put the head code up boards during the day and electric head lamps at night (none of your common old oil lamps that end). When it came to starting time the driver would ring the bell once then the fireman would repeat same. By this time you had the reversing lever firmly in your grasp (didn't want any of that funny business mentioned earlier). Once the train was on the move the lever was set to its best running position and then the fireman was able to carry on with his firing duties in the normal way. When the fireman next heard the bell it was to indicate that the driver was just about to close the regulator in readiness for stopping at the next station.

Before I get too far on, the testing of this equipment was usually done in the sidings with the guard or shunter in attendance, but at a terminus such as Brighton it would sometimes have to be done in the platform. I wonder what the passengers really thought as they saw the guard standing out on the platform moving his arm up and down above his head - to me it meant a brake test was required; or when the driver would also stand on the platform with his arm straight down, moving it from side to side - once again, to me this meant he was about to test the regulator control equipment. To the passengers nothing was happening. A quick scratch on the cranium as they entered the train left us in no doubt that they were very much puzzled by the tick-tack messages that were being passed from one end to the other.

There were times when the train had to be taken into the loco shed for filling the car end sand boxes and when our fitters had work to do on the control equipment. At Horsham this work had to be done in a siding behind the signal box as the shed wasn't big enough to take a 2 coach set without being foul of everything including the turntable.

In the event of a serious mishap the duties of the fireman and guard were reversed. As he was riding with the driver he would go forward to protect the train and I would secure the engine and go to the rear to protect, the driver would then return to take care of the engine. Fortunately I never had the need to do this. The nearest we came to trouble was one day we had left Horsham propelling a train to Brighton. As we stopped at Christ Hospital the engine sprang away from the train by a foot or so. On checking we found that everything had been coupled up except the screw shackie. We had done all the tests, checked the pipes and lines, but no-one had spotted that the coupling wasn't over the hook - a quick ease up put that right, no harm done.

The car end was equipped with 12 detonators and 2 red flags - just the same as the engine and at no time was an electric head lamp allowed to be used as a tail lamp even though they were fitted with red shades; that was only used when the traffic of a double line was operated on a single line due to accident or repairs under the instructions of a pilotman.

When those trains were working on a single track branch line the staff, ticket, or electric token was always in the possession of the driver whether he was at the car end or on the engine, and the only two people to handle the staff or token was the signalman on each end of the section and the driver.

The bell code that was used was as follows:

1 short ring (about to open or close regulator)
2 rings ? (THIS ONE I CAN'T REMEMBER)
3 rings (sound the engine whistle)
4 rings (put the engine into reverse)
1 long ring (emergency stop)

Mike has kindly said he will get a small diagram copied off that will explain things far better than I can. Thanks Mike.

As I said when I started, I doubt whether I have remembered enough to make it a true record, but the one thing I can say is that I would very much like to be back on the footplate of engine 32384 with driver Bill Percival and Guard Nat (SABU) Worster bringing up the rear. Still, memories can be pretty precious, can't they.

Nuff sed,

J Pitt

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

9th July 1987

Dear Mike,

This year we decided to take the rail journey of a life-time and have just got back. I thought fellow members of the Society may be interested in some of our experiences.

The journey consisted, firstly, of Euston to Inverness, and, secondly, spending three days of our fortnight in Thurso. Booking through a travel agent, we arrived in good time for the night sleeper at Euston. Having used that station many times in the past, I was uite unprepared for what I found, for gone was the statue of George Stephenson and the grand Victorian staircase to the boardroom and quarters of the senior officials of the line. In their place were no doubt highly remunerative commercial premises such as "Tie Rack", and a large area devoted to the needs of the "inner man" where I could have obtained any of a large variety of rich foods of the "doughnut" kind, but after enquiring at the half dozen or so vendors in this area I was quite unable to obtain a nice bland night-cap appropriate to our O.A.P status. However, in lieu, having obtained a couple of cups of typically machine made tea and consumed them, we made our way to the departure point, where the illuminated sign told us

Dave Lowndes

It is with sadness that I also report the passing of distant member Dave Lowndes. Living in Manchester, and a long time member of the Urmston club, Dave joined SMLS in the early 1970's when there was a closer tie up between our clubs. We would meet at the Alexandra Palace show where he would routinely pay his sub' (always plus a donation) and keep in touch via e-mail. Dave was a lifelong & very proficient model engineer who helped with our 1970's extension project.

Andrew B

Alexandra Palace Exhibition

Mid-January 2020 and for the 12th year in a row, SMLS had a stand at the London Model Engineering Exhibition at Alexandra Palace. The original plan for 2020 featured a working turntable with tracks feeding from it but due to time constraints before and during Christmas this plan was curtailed – for this year at least. We did, however, still exhibit a number of BR Standard locomotives, along with two BR Mark 1 coaches – very much a 1950's feel!

Preparations for the show were in full swing during the weeks before and these included arrangements for the collection and delivery of exhibits as well as making sure all the display assets at the club were ready. The display tracks that Peter Chapman & Graham Mundy constructed many years ago have been underused in recent years due to their overall length compared to the width of the stands the aisles at Alexandra Palace permit. As such, Mike W, Sam R & I set to after Christmas to reduce the overhang on some of the tracks by an approx' 8". The scale rail itself was originally supplied as a 1 metre (3' 3") length but the base boards were 4'. When Peter made them, he left the 9" overhang as excess but this has meant we could only use the boards if they were lengthways along the stand because the width is a tight 8' (almost all big 5" gauge locomotives require two pieces of track for their total length). With all the boards now at 3' 4" we can use them either lengthways or in the case of this year, crossways in a fan shape, without the ends overhanging the stand. Sam R also spent several hours gluing all the rail chair wedges to stop them coming out. A good job by all concerned, they looked excellent on the stand and the work that Peter & Graham had done previously can now be used each and every year...

Thursday 16th January was set up day and two vans plus a car took all our 'stuff' to north London. The aforementioned 'stuff' as follows (all 5" gauge locomotives): 'BR Class 3', 'BR Class 4' & 'BR Class 5'. In addition we also took a 3 ½" & 5" gauge locomotive of a 'BR Class 7' & 'BR Class 9'. To round off this collection we also took two 5" gauge Mark 1 coaches, one a 'BSK' & one a 'RB', as well as a superb original oil painting of a 'BR Class 7' & 'BR Class 9'. A slightly delayed start from Beech Hurst (the jigsaw puzzle of fitting everything in) and a detour via Horsham meant Andrew S, Mike W & I did not arrive until 14:00 – better late than never they say! That said, because our stand position had been moved to the 'Rose Window' end of the hall, unloading was a breeze (with help from Adam, Hugh T & John B) and by 16:00 we were done, dusted (the exhibits quite literally) and setting off for home (**picture next page**: Our 2020 stand).



Friday saw Adam, Hugh T, John B, Norman, Roy P & I manning the stand, and a busy day it was too! Despite an initial scepticism about our proximity to the end of the hall (normally it is colder at that end), and a potentially vocal trader next door, it was ok for the duration of the weekend and actually worked out very well. All of the models were well received and we kept busy talking to friends and fellow model engineers, as well as the thousands of other visitors.

Saturday saw the age profile dip somewhat! Adam, Hugh T, John B, Roy P & I were joined by Sam H, Sam R & Toby who helped bring the average age nearer to the 40 mark, rather than the 60 mark on Friday! All joking aside though, it was really good to have some of our young contingent again this year and something which other clubs simply cannot muster. As an added bonus, the organisers were seeking publicity shots for the show and as such Adam, Sam H, Sam R, Toby & I had our 15 minutes of fame in front of the lens with some really nice photographs taken either as a group or individually (**picture next page**: One of the group). Aside this pictorial interlude, the Saturday was really well attended and we were generally busy talking with visitors about our club and the models on display.

Sunday is generally the quietest of the 3 days and so it proved again this year. Not that there was a shortage of visitors but just not in the quantity of Friday or Saturday. Sunday's crew was Adam, Andrew S, Hugh T, Mike T, Mike W & I (average back up just a bit to roughly 45 years!). Another good day was had by all and after the visitors vacated we then had the small task of packing everything away into the vehicles, greatly helped by photographs taken on the Thursday!

This was a good deal easier than on the way up and happily everything went back exactly as it arrived! After another stop in Horsham, we arrived back at Beech Hurst around 21:00, unloaded and went home ready for Monday morning! It had been another excellent weekend and a very big thank you to all those listed above who helped before, during and after the show but particularly to Adam for much of the organisation and for leading the BR Standard idea. It is a lot of work but if our and other clubs do not make the effort, the show will not survive and the 12,000 or so visitors will not have a show to visit. With this in mind, hopefully we can maintain our participation in future years with our younger members taking the reins from the older generation. Here's to 2021...



Andrew B

Winter Work

Hardly a day without rain in the past couple of months has meant only a small amount of Winter Work being progressed since the last edition.

Outside, Roy P has spent a few hours checking the track and making adjustments to some bases and piers where they have become misaligned during the winter months. Many are still under water and the ground around too wet to work on, so final checks will have to wait for now.

Also outside, and as recently as last week, an afternoon working party removed the old chain link fence through the jungle in readiness for a new galvanised steel one to be installed from signal 1 to the far end of the jungle by the tennis courts. This means the plastic chain fence used during operating days is superfluous.

Thanks to Andrew S, Graham Miller, John B, Marc & I for assisting with this task. (Pictures below: Our old fence being removed and the new one installed).



Inside, and the aforementioned display track modifications were completed in time for Alexandra Palace with thanks to Mike W, Sam R & I for completing the lion's share of this task. They worked really well on the stand and received a number of complimentary comments too.

Also inside, and with the workshop in mind, Mike W has continued to sort out and re-label the drawers of tools. This will continue and a final tidy up completed once the new soldering and welding extraction equipment has been installed in the rear workshop. This is due for final fitting any day now.

The club Class 73 has been mothballed for the time being and is currently resident in the white locker. If needs be this locomotive could be resurrected at fairly short notice but there are no plans to use it during 2020. In addition, Graham Mundy has serviced the 'Growler' and made remedial repairs where a battery leak had started to corrode the sole plate and control box.

In the kitchen, a new cupboard with drawers has been fitted to replace the old 'curtained' cupboard. Andrew S, Mike W & I removed the old unit one Thursday evening and then partially installed the new 'flat pack' before finishing it off over the next couple of weekends. The result is a clean and refreshed area to keep our day-to-day supplies and towels etc... (see picture below).



Finally for now and it is great to see younger members using our workshop for their projects. Sam C with help from John Green & Roy P has been working on a 3 ½" 'Tich' restoration project and Sam R with help from Roy P & I is getting stuck into his 5" '14xx' project. Well done to both of you, keep up the enthusiasm and with a bit of commitment from all concerned both of these locomotives may well have fires lit during the course of our 2020 season!

A final Winter Work for this closed season will appear in the April edition...

Andrew B

Workshop Sale

Following the passing of Jack Pitt, the following items are being offered for sale, in the first instance to SMLS members. Each is detailed below, complete with a guide price and accompanying photograph. All the items are offered to SMLS members on a first-come, first-served basis except for 'Sweet Pea' 'Nobby', which is offered by sealed bids to allow all members the same opportunity to buy depending on when they receive this edition. Contact details are shown by each:

Myford ML10 Lathe, complete with 2 lathe chucks, 2 drill chucks, faceplate, Dewhurst reversing switch and other accessories. **Offers in excess of £500 and please contact Billy on 01403 264970 – picture below.**



Alpine Mill Drill, complete with 2 vices and cutters. Offers in excess of £350 and please contact Billy on 01403 264970 – picture below.



3 ½" gauge 'Princess Marina' locomotive project, at an early stage with many castings and a professional 'Swindon' boiler. **Offers in excess of £1,000 and please contact Billy on 01403 264970 – picture below.**



3 ½" gauge 'Sweet Pea' 'Nobby' locomotive, and built in just over 3 months(!), was Les (Nobby) Clarke's last locomotive project. The 'Sweet Pea' was finished in the mid-1980's and has been little used since then. Not only is this a very rare model in 3 ½" gauge but it was also built with a locomotive style boiler rather than the published 'marine' boiler that many 'Sweet Pea' locomotives carry. In addition there is genuine history being one of nearly 20 locomotives that Les built during his life and our most prolific builder to date. **Offers in excess of £2,500 and please contact Andrew Strongitharm at: andrewstrongitharm10@gmail.com or by post: 5 Turners Mill Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 1NW by Tuesday 31st March with your first and final offer – picture next page.**



Andrew S

Work in Progress

As I start this newsletter, the chassis of my guard's van sits beside me and I am currently fitting the steel weights which are to be added above each wheel set. The full size guard's van has scrap steel in a chamber above each axle but for tidiness I thought a couple of pieces of 10mm plate would suffice! These will be integrated with the 'W' irons and locked in place through the steel side channels. Luckily, 55993 (Bluebell's resident full-size equivalent) has been on jacks in the carriage works at Horsted Keynes so I have been able to get some shots from underneath highlighting how the brake gear is assembled. Brake gear will be a retro-fit once the guard's van is back up and running. For now, I am continuing with the reconstruction phase and with all the step boards' in-situ, and the weights nearly there, a rebuilt rolling chassis is very much in sight!

Andrew B

Forthcoming & Diary of Events

I have now updated the Diary as far as possible into 2020 (Coronavirus permitting) and with a bit of luck we can organise a number of other items during the course of the year. There are a few ideas boiling away in the background and hopefully one or two of these will come to fruition.

Given the current Coronavirus outbreak, our 2020 running season **will not** commence on Good Friday, 10th April. The committee will keep members abreast of developments **but for now our club activities are suspended.**

In addition, the visit to Fawley Hill on Sunday 26th April has been cancelled because of the Coronavirus. A rescheduled date will be announced asap...

Friday 8th May is VE Day Anniversary Bank Holiday and we plan to run a normal service between 14:00 – 17:00. Separate MSDC celebrations are taking place on Muster Green, so hopefully there will be a good number of people close by.

Into mid-summer and our Open Day will hopefully take place on Saturday 20th June. Since the December edition, it has also been decided to invite Chelmsford club to visit on 20th, so with a bit of luck the two events together will provide for a really good day. In addition, and whilst members are at Beech Hurst, our first BBQ of the year will hopefully take place the same evening starting at 18:00.

The following weekend and a 24-hour run has been pencilled in for Friday 26th into Saturday 27th. This is planned to start on Friday afternoon at 17:00 with continuous running until 24 hours later on the Saturday. Further details and rosters are to be confirmed, with Steve S in the lead.

Into late July and a Charity Day has been pencilled in for Monday 27th. This has been planned to coincide with our annual run for 'The Yews' and details for both will be released in either the April or June editions.

Two days later and the Focus Model Engineers will visit us on Wednesday 29th.

Finally for now and our 'end of summer' BBQ has been pencilled in for Saturday 29th August and this is due to start at 18:00.

I shall keep the Diary updated in the next edition with reports (hopefully) from some of the below and more items to follow for 2020...

~~10th April 2020 – Good Friday – Official 2020 running season commences~~

~~26th April 2020 – SMLS to visit Fawley Hill – See above~~

8th May 2020 – VE Day Anniversary Bank Holiday – From 14:00 – TBC

20th June 2020 – Open Day + Chelmsford to visit SMLS – From 10:00 – TBC

20th June 2020 – Mid-summer 'bring your own' BBQ evening – From 18:00 – TBC

26th / 27th June 2020 – 24 hour run – See details above – From 17:00 – TBC

27th July 2020 – Charity Run – See details above – From 13:00 – TBC

29th July 2020 – Focus Model Engineers to visit SMLS – From 10:00 – TBC

29th August 2020 – Summer 'bring your own' BBQ evening – From 18:00 – TBC

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

Andrew B

And finally..., a light hearted look at some of our workshop favourites courtesy of Clive Hiscock...

Drill Press: A tall upright machine useful for suddenly snatching flat metal bar stock out of your hands so that it smacks you in the chest and flings your beer across the room, denting the freshly-painted project which you had carefully set in the corner where nothing could get to it.

Wire Wheel: Cleans paint off bolts and then throws them somewhere under the workbench with the speed of light. Also removes fingerprints and hard-earned calluses from fingers in about the time it takes you to say, 'Oh sh*t'.

Pliers: Used to round off bolt heads, sometimes used to create blood-blisters.

Belt Sander: An electric sanding tool commonly used to convert minor touch-up jobs into major refinishing jobs.

Hacksaw: One of a family of cutting tools built on the 'Ouija Board' principle... It transforms human energy into a crooked, unpredictable motion, and the more you attempt to influence its course, the more dismal your future becomes.

Vise-Grips: Generally used after pliers to completely round off bolt heads. If nothing else is available, they can also be used to transfer intense welding heat to the palm of your hand.

Oxyacetylene Torch: Used almost entirely for lighting on fire various flammable objects in your workshop. Also handy for igniting the grease inside the wheel hub out of which you want to remove a bearing race.

Hydraulic Floor Jack: Used for lowering an automobile to the ground after you have installed your new brake shoes, whilst trapping the jack handle firmly under the bumper.

Band Saw: A large stationary power saw primarily used by most workshops to cut good aluminium sheet into smaller pieces that more easily fit into the trash can after you cut on the inside of the line instead of the outside edge.

Two-Ton Engine Hoist: A tool for testing the maximum tensile strength of everything you forgot to disconnect.

Phillips Screwdriver: Normally used to stab the vacuum seals under lids or for opening old-style paper-and-tin oil cans and splashing oil on your shirt; but can also be used, as the name implies, to strip out Phillips screw heads.

Straight Screwdriver: A tool for opening paint cans. Sometimes used to convert common slotted screws into non-removable screws and butchering your palms.

Pry Bar: A tool used to crumple the metal surrounding that clip or bracket you needed to remove in order to replace a 50p part.

Hammer: Originally employed as a weapon of war, the hammer nowadays is used as a kind of divining rod to locate the most expensive parts adjacent the object we are trying to hit.

Adjustable Wrench: aka 'Another hammer', aka 'the Swedish Nut Lathe', aka 'Crescent Wrench'. Commonly used as a one size fits all wrench, usually results in rounding off nut heads before the use of pliers. It will randomly adjust size between bolts, resulting in busted buckles, curse words, and multiple threats to any inanimate objects within the immediate vicinity.

Clive H