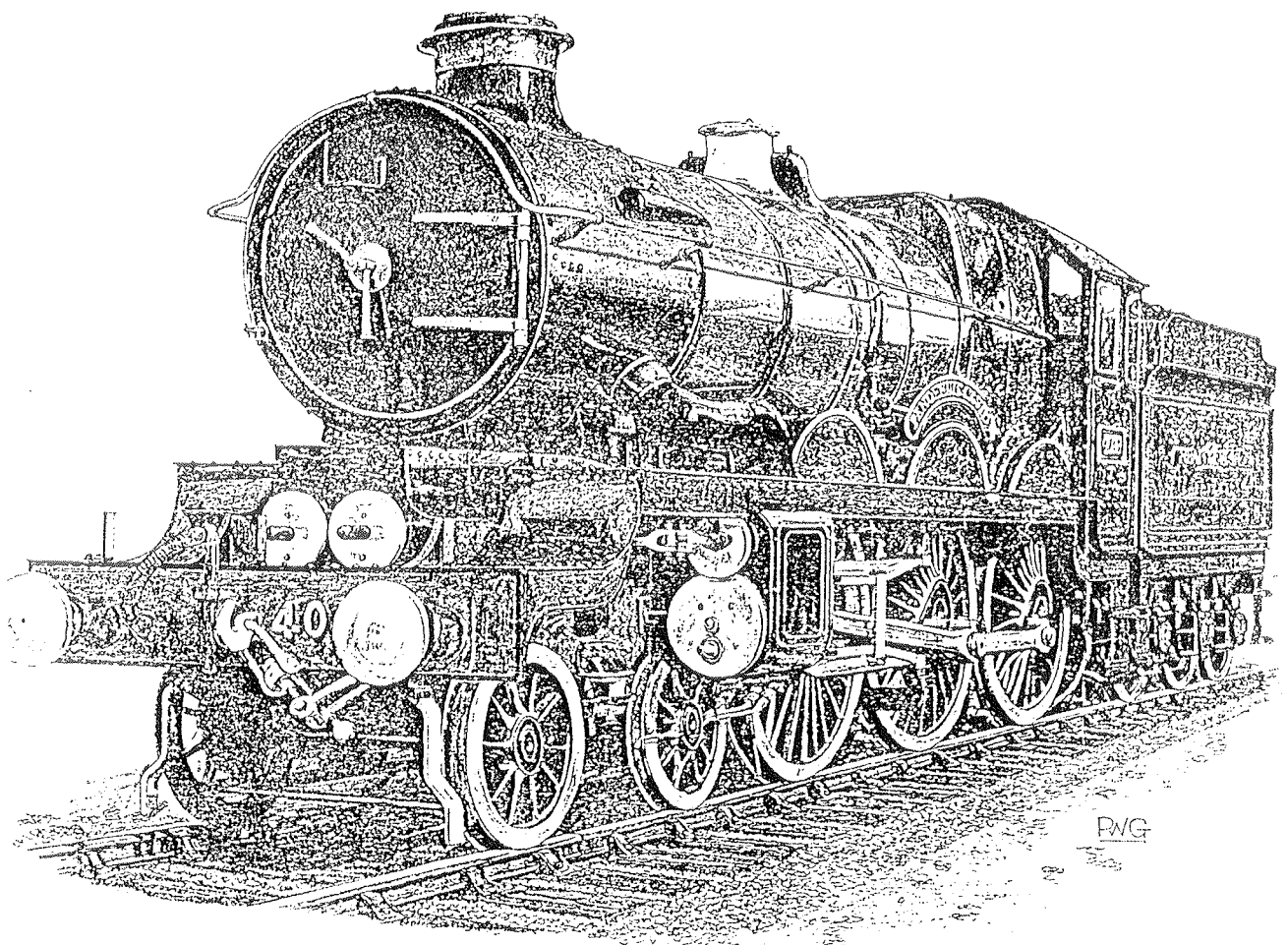


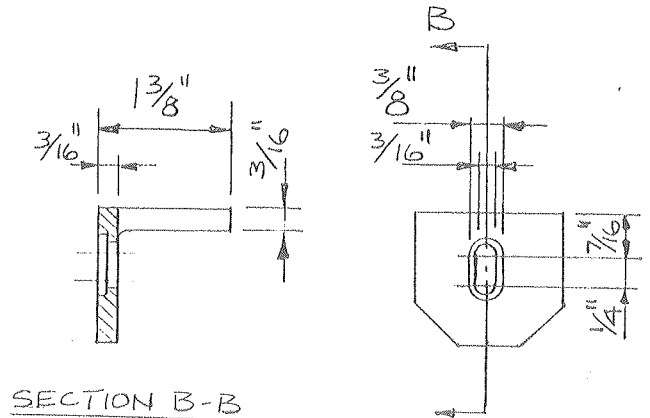
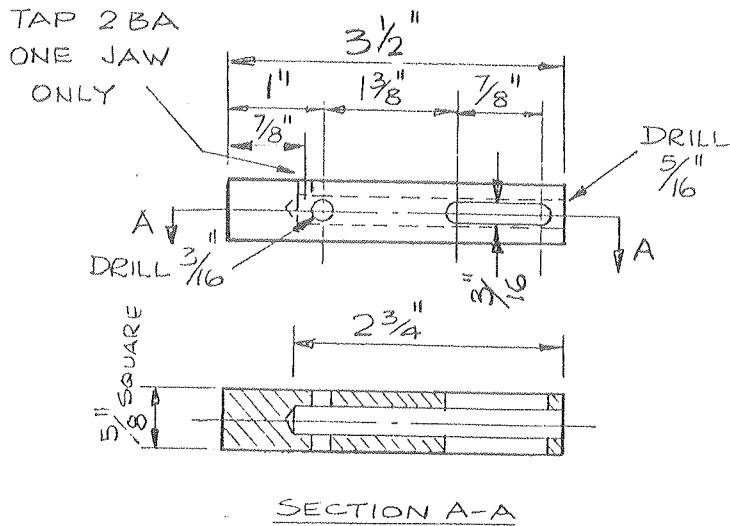
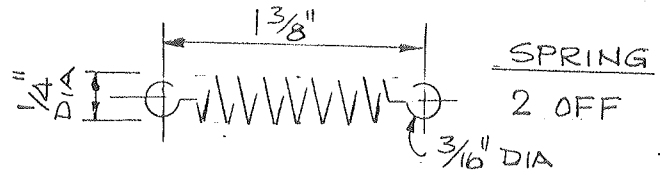
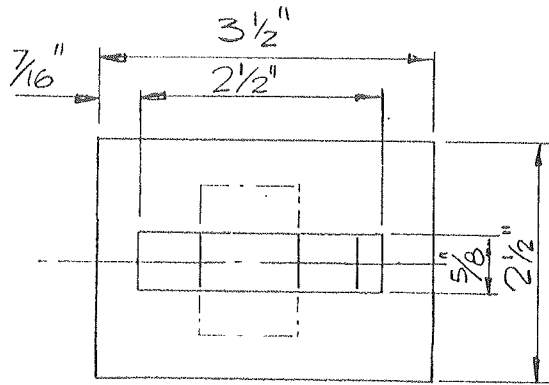
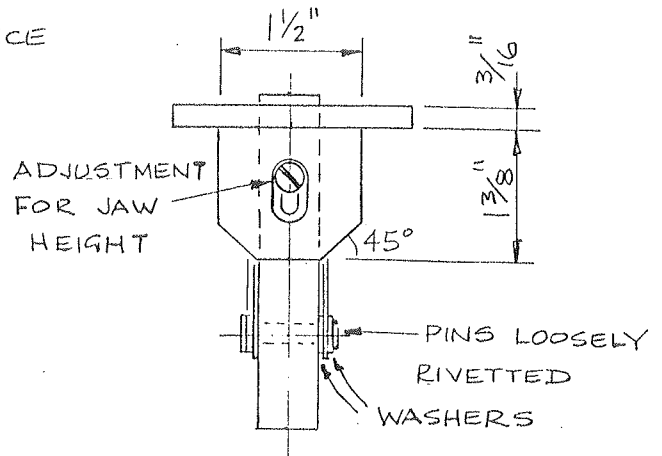
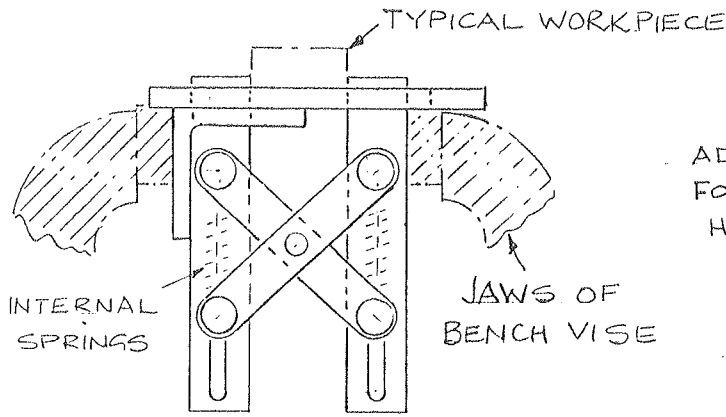
MAIDSTONE MODEL ENGINEERING SOCIETY.



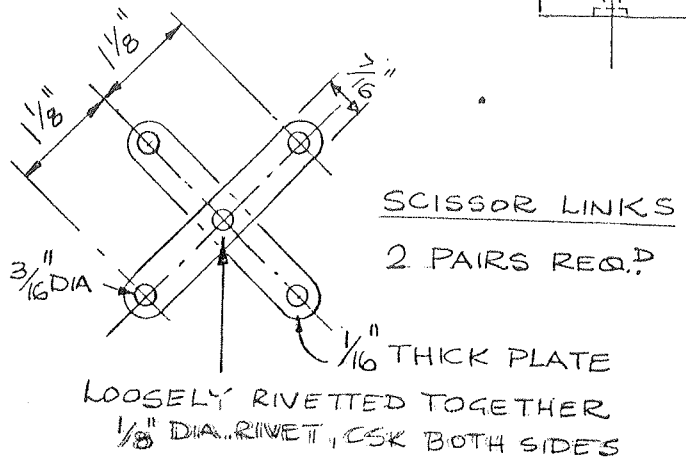
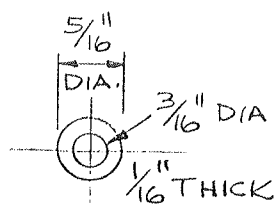
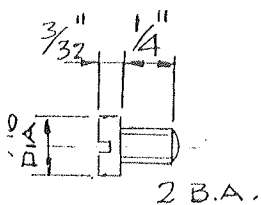
NEWSLETTER - WINTER 1993.

PLATE VICE

MATERIAL: ALL M.S. EXCEPT SPRINGS



VICE JAW - 2 OFF
SLIDING FIT IN TOP PLATE



A BEGINNERS EXPERIENCES OF STEAM LOCO BUILDING

These ramblings were prompted by Sue's comment that few articles are offered for the Newsletter, but what can a beginner tell the veteran steam loco builder? Of course there are Club Members who haven't built a loco yet and they are probably about to be put off for ever.

It all happened one day when my sons were leaving home, one for British Gas, one in the Army and the third learning about beer drinking. Surprise, I actually had some spare cash and some spare time. Perusing through the local small ads I spotted a second-hand Myford lathe for sale and a quick phone call confirmed that it was still available. Literally an hour later a sale had been agreed for a Super 7 with cabinet and splash guard at a price most people now pay for a HI-FI.

In due time the machine was installed in a corner of the garage and I was soon reminded of a mistake that all parents make --- NEVER leave your prize possessions anywhere within reach of your offspring. Comments like 'I didn't know it needed oiling' (lathe) and 'That's a good scraper' (2ft. precision rule) make the blood run hot and cold, prompting choice dialogue learnt years ago within the walls of Chatham Dockyard. Nevertheless, a start was made after good advice given by the original proprietor of Maidstone MES, that 'The sooner you make a start on a loco, the better'. Whether he thought I looked a bit old, was considering the ever-increasing cost of raw materials or just wanted a quick sale, one will never know.

Drawings, instruction book and a few castings were purchased for the SIMPLEX designed by Martin Evans for the beginner. Before long it becomes clear that instruction books can only tell you so much, and reference must be made to other sources of information. Books such as Martin Evans' Manual of the Model Steam Locomotive, LBSC's Shop Shed & Road and numerous back copies of M.E. all make good reading. In addition, a basic knowledge of engineering drawings and metalworking techniques is essential if expensive mistakes are to be minimised.

Most mechanical machines are best built from a datum if any degree of accuracy and smooth running is to be achieved. As a suitable surface plate to mark out the frames was not at hand, an old plate glass mirror was spared its journey to the council tip after checking for flatness with the 2ft. rule. We are advised to anneal the PMS before cutting and sawing out the frames to avoid distortion. This is fine if you have a large gas torch but difficult without one.

As predicted, the frames warped when cutting out the horn slots, necessitating corrective adjustment with the hammer. After this little setback, the frames, spacers and buffer beams were made and assembled without major problems. From the plans it was noted that the front spacer, positioned over the rear axle, would block any easy access to the feed pump eccentric for lubrication.

To improve this arrangement, a hole about 1" diameter was bored in the centre of the spacer directly over the eccentric sheave. Wheels and axles were turned up to the instruction book and quartering by a simple axle cradle with turned pillars under the crank pins, the height of which being worked out by basic triangles. A layout of the boiler feed pump detailed a screwed elbow for each of the two section connections. For me, screwed elbows never tighten up pointing in the required direction, so banjo connections were fitted instead. Similarly for the discharge and bypass branch, giving best flexibility for piping up.

By now the first winter evenings had been endured in the corner of the garage, with the electric fire creating more condensation from the roof than BThUs around the feet. Christmas was rapidly approaching and big hints dropped in the vicinity of wife and offspring brought the desired result on the day. A Clarke drill press with 5/8" capacity chuck in No.2 Morse taper spindle was presented collectively by the family.

Over the next few months, a good range of HSS taper shank drills, purchased at various boot fairs and flea markets soon accumulated. Boot fairs are the writers favourite source of supply for most tools and occasionally useful items of raw material are found. A magnet soon identifies high grade stainless steel from cutlery quality. On one eventful day a 4" M&W micrometer was found in a box complete with all anvils. It is difficult to conceal excitement in these situations when hearing the asking price of £5, but self control comes with practice.

As work progressed on the loco, frustration increased directly as the square of the number of components needing safe custody. Accidental incarceration of the inquisitive cat over night proved that Feline P is second only to Nitromors for removing paint from the lathe cabinet. More suitable premises were urgently needed, a major proposal had to be put to the general committee (wife).

An area of about 10'x10' between the trees in a remote part of the garden, where nothing much grows, looked the most suitable for the new workshop. Draught-proof weatherboard was chosen for the cladding and an order placed with Southern Sheds.

Several weeks passed between order date and delivery, giving ample time for the laying of concrete base together with electricity supply. As the base was suitably prepared, the supplier assembled on delivery, thus avoiding VAT. The only task left to the purchaser under these agreements is nailing on the roofing felt. The felt as supplied is usually rather spit-through, really only good for rabbit hutches and the like, and a few more quid spent on a thick mineralled felt will save renewal after about a year. Some lessons are learnt the hard way.

Wall insulation is provided by 1" thick sheets of chipboard screwed to the wooden frame with an infill of expanded polystyrene sheets. Floor cover by bitumen backed carpet tiles ex-kitchen. After a few more weeks, equipment had been relocated, door lock fitted, and the 'Open all hours, free issue loan tool store' was history.

John Parrow.

to be continued.

TRIP TO THE ISLE OF MAN by PETER JACKSON

"Darling", I said, giving the wife a quick cuddle, "I'll take you to the Isle of Man". "Why? Never heard of the place! Is there an Isle of Woman? You must be joking! Have you been before?" My fault, of course, for encouraging the dear girl to take an interest in her surroundings. "Let me tell you", I said, fielding the easiest question first, "about the time I went there when I was quite young".

We travelled on the "Victoria" from Liverpool. The boat had two funnels, coal-fired boilers and reciprocating engines. On the stern was a large gun with a man guarding it. I was informed by the man that I was not allowed near the gun because "It is here in case we are attacked by a German submarine and don't sit on that box, that is the ammunition!" The box had a big padlock on it and the Captain had the key! Arrived at Douglas, our identity cards were checked and some of us had our baggage and our persons searched. This was repeated on the way home but they didn't catch the fat lady who had lots of knitting wool wound round her waist. A lot of ordinary things were scarce in England in 1944! The hotels on the seafront at Douglas were surrounded by barbed wire fences and soldiers with rifles guarded them. "That is a prison camp for Germans", I was told, "so don't stare and don't stick your tongue out or wave. Just pretend they are not there".

Bound to be a bit different this time, I mused, approaching a well-known travel agent in Chatham High Street. "We have nothing on The Isle of Man", I was told, "Nobody goes there". Obtaining at last the address of The Isle of Man Tourist Board, I wrote for details of the forthcoming railway celebrations.

Meanwhile, we had a holiday in Malta.

Receiving the Manx 1993 price list, I wrote for a bus timetable, a book on touring the Island and a map of Douglas. My letter and cheque were returned; the prices had gone up. I sent another cheque and waited.

Meanwhile, we had a holiday in Rhodes.

My letter and cheque were returned because the map of Douglas was out of print. I sent a third letter and cheque.

Meanwhile, we had a holiday in Brussels.

No wonder I had been told "No-one goes to the Isle of Man". "Why bother going?" said the wife, "Save the money". "Well", I replied, "it is very interesting. The Island's symbol has three legs and the pussy cats have no

tails". I was not believed and who could blame her. On honeymoon in Scotland I had given her a jacket potato with haggis filling, telling her that haggis is a rare bird with one wing which flies in circles round the mountain tops.

"That's very expensive". The wife had seen the cheque I was sending to the hotel. "We could go to Greece for twice that". "Ah, but this will be a very interesting experience. They have lots of trains". "You know me on a train", she replied, "lullaby lullaby. You waste your money". "We are flying from Luton, another new experience, a small aircraft". "I enjoyed the ferryboat to Belgium. Why can't we use the ferryboat?" "Too late", I said, "I've paid the airfare and booked a place for the car at Luton Airport". Exit wife, muttering darkly. We were not off to a good start.

Two laps round Luton Airport and I found car park B, checked in the luggage, climbed the ladder into the aircraft, the two propellers spun and we were off. Time for tea and biscuits, the smallest barley sugar I have ever seen and we were there.

Now for a bus to Douglas. We sat at the bus stop. The airport gradually became deserted until only one taxi was left. "The buses are on strike", said the driver. "Cost you £12 to Douglas". We took it. "Better the ferry boat" said the wife in a stage whisper. "We had two ferry boats", said the taxi driver, "but last week one had an accident. The captain called for "Full Astern" but the engines went "Full Ahead". They hit the pier and bent the bow of the ferryboat. She has gone for repairs. Only half a service now but at least you can get a tee-shirt with the inscription "Who put that pier there?""

After a night in an hotel with superb food and musical plumbing, we went for a ride on the 100-year-old electric train. This consists of one motor car and one open 'toast-rack' trailer car, the latter having no doors. Although the trailer car has a hand brake and the two units are linked by a safety chain, I could see no evidence of continuous braking on the train. Clearly they had not received the same communication from Brussels that we had received! The track ran alongside the road for a considerable distance with no fence in between the cars and the trains, just a white line painted on the ground. To stop the train, you stood in the road and waved at the driver. He waved back. On some corners, the squealing noise made by the flanges rubbing the check rails set the teeth on edge and the end play between the trailer car axle and the axle boxes was about 1 1/2 ". The scenery, however, was really beautiful and the ride very interesting.

The steam trains are the same gauge as the electric - 3' and the coaches are hauled by 2-4-0 external cylinder engines with lots of huff and puff,

not to say rock and roll. Hold onto your seat folks, even my missus couldn't sleep on this ride. With the simplest of signalling systems and country stations without platforms, this railway has a rural charm which is hard to beat. Waiting at Castletown to catch the last train of the day back to Douglas, we were surprised when it arrived half an hour early, chugged slowly past us and vanished round the bend in the direction of Douglas. The station master ambled over "There has been an accident. A farmer with a tractor and trailer tried to beat the train across a level crossing and didn't quite make it. We have bent the engine and all the coaches so you will have to go back by bus." As only one bus was provided for the whole train load, several of us had to stand all the way.

"Well, at least we enjoyed the horse trams on the promenade". "Yes", said the wife, "but think of that poor horse and the mess it leaves in the middle of the road". Then with a big smile, she said "Good for the garden. We'll take some home!" Now I do allow souvenirs in our luggage, even rocks from the seashore, but you have to draw the line somewhere!

We missed the T.T. races by design and were there during Crown Green Bowls and International Cycle Racing Weeks. Some people in the next hotel had brought their penny-farthing bicycles and rode these at a sedate pace along the promenade. The main events were held elsewhere.

On the last day, returning from the shops we saw a huge cloud of black smoke near the ferry terminal. As we drew near, camera in hand, there was a loud rumbling and a shriek of steam whistles and a parade of steam traction engines, rollers and waggons came past us and headed for a steep hill. The week-end steam rally had assembled. The last vehicle was a miniature traction engine with trailer, about 4' high to the top of the chimney. The lady sitting on the trailer made sure that the driver had a plentiful supply of coal and the traffic jam behind this lot had to be seen to be believed.

I never did get my timetable and book from The Tourist Board so you shouldn't be surprised when I tell you that a large number of the hotels on Douglas promenade are empty and boarded up. Tourism is not what it was. The famous Manx kippers? Good for breakfast in the hotel but too expensive to send home.

Next holiday abroad? you ask; Philippines. Perhaps I'll get a ride on the Metrorail in Manila. "Each train has 2 coaches and can take 750 people. Doors open for only 30 seconds." Now someone slow and fat could easily be carried too far under these conditions.

BOILER TESTING

LISTING OF EXPIRED CERTIFICATES OR EXPIRING BEFORE THE END OF APRIL 1994.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>MODEL</u>	<u>EXPIRY</u>
MR D.BUTCHER	5" GAUGE 0-6-0 POLLY	12/04/94
MR P.CARPENTER	5" GAUGE 0-6-0T SIMPLEX "W.NORTON"	15/09/92
MR N.F.CLARK	5" GAUGE 0-4-0ST SWEET PEA	28/09/93
MR N.F.CLARK	4 1/2" SCALE BURRELL TRACTION ENGINE	11/04/94
MR C.E.P.DARLEY	5" GAUGE 0-4-0T "BAUDOT"	09/11/93
MR F.DEEPPOSE	5" GAUGE 0-4-0 "POLLY 2"	11/04/94
MR D.A.DELLER	3 1/2"GAUGE TICH	03/08/93
MR T.GREGSON	5" GAUGE 0-6-0T BUTCH	22/07/91
MR T.GREGSON	5" GAUGE GWR 2-6-2T	30/06/92
MR T.GREGSON	3" SCALE ATKINSON STEAM LORRY	30/06/92
MR A.E.GURR	3 1/2" GAUGE 0-6-0T ROB ROY "SIOUXSIE"	28/12/93
MR R.HODGKINS	5" GAUGE 0-6-0 SIMPLEX No.1270	08/02/94
MR L.HULBERT	VERTICAL STATIONARY	15/09/94
MR G.KIMBER	5" GAUGE 0-4-0 "WREN"	20/09/88
MR N.KING	5" GAUGE 0-4-0ST SWEET PEA	30/04/91
MR N.KING	3 1/2" GAUGE 4-6-0 DORIS No.4771	08/07/91
MR P.KINGSFORD	5" GAUGE 4-4-2 JERSEY LILY	04/04/94
MR R.J.LINKINS	5" GAUGE 2-6-0	07/07/92
MR P.MARTIN	5" GAUGE 0-6-0T SIMPLEX	03/08/93
MR P.MARTIN	3 1/2" GAUGE BLACK FIVE	05/10/93
MR A.PROBYN	5" GAUGE 0-4-0 "DIXIE"	26/05/92
MR E.PURSEY	3 1/2" GAUGE NE 4-4-0 "MISS TEN TO EIGHT"	19/10/93
MR E.PURSEY	5" GAUGE LMS 0-6-0T	19/10/93
MR R.R.STAGG	3 1/2" GAUGE 4-6-2 BRITANNIA "BOADICEA"	10/06/91
MR C.THORNDYCRAFT	5" GAUGE 0-6-0 SPEEDY	19/08/91
MR C.THORNDYCRAFT	5" GAUGE D CLASS 4-4-0 No. 737	24/08/93
MR B.WHITE	3 1/2" GAUGE JULIET 0-4-0T	25/08/93
MR M.WREN	3 1/2" GAUGE 0-4-0 "TICH"	23/02/93

Members wishing to have a boiler tested by the Society, to the Southern Federation test standards, MUST make prior arrangement with one of the testers listed below and another member of the Society to act as witness for the test. A charge of 50p. will be made for each certificate issued to cover the cost of the certificate.

Any boiler produced for a test must be fitted with a 1/4 x 40 ME male fitting to take the test pump.

Mr.G.Kimber. 4 The Stream, Ditton, Maidstone. W.Malling 845931

Mr.P.Kingsford. 16 Cherry Tree Road, Charing Heath. Charing 2086

Mr.M.Parham. 9 The Landway, Bearsted. Maidstone 630298

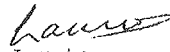
Mr.D.Paterson. 1 Westlawn, Little Ivy Mill, Loose. Maidstone 743081

Mr.A.Payne. 38 Oxford Road, Maidstone. Maidstone 757545

From... Mr. D.E. Laurie Lawrence
66 Whipnade Home Park
Whipnade
Dunstable Beds LU6 2LP

16 Sept '93
At seq...

Dear Sue,
A piece as promised. I hope the members will treat it in the same light-hearted way it is written. I have whittled it down a good deal already (and deleted some jolly ! repartee between me and a saucy lady doc and ditto Sister) and, although it is a little long still, please do not cut further. If it does not suit, say so, and I'll have it back. No hard feelings! Actually, when I showed up at B'ham the first thing I was told was the list of those who had waved ta-ta since I was last there. And also who had what trouble, so I figured a little reassurance might well be topical.
Best wishes to you all


Laurie

CHART

(A not too serious account of a serious matter
relevant to model engineers knocking on a bit)
by Laurie

I suppose every model engineer at some time or other is faced with a decision - To be or not to be (to quote the Bard) or To do or not to do. Thus it was with me when the specialist said -- If it is cancer do you want to know? What a way to tell you. Do you want to know? Well, having made the damning inference from the man, you swallow a couple of whole hard boiled eggs and gulp - yes - and forget to say please. So, the man says he is not very happy about carving up people (That's a relief, since I'm not very happy about that too, although I did not mind 50 or so years ago having a shooting match with the Hun and Little Yellow Men). Well now, says the man, have a word with my colleague, she will tell you about CHART and RT.

What you don't find out until after is that CHART is still more or less on a trial basis, although it was first used at Mount Vernon Hospital in 1985. Oh, CHART is an acronym:-

Continuous
Hyper
Accelerated
Radio
Therapy.

According to the booklet (one of four I was given) (well-informed, see!) the details of Chart treatment are decided at the Medical Research Council Trials Office in Cambridge. You, Mr. or Mrs. Patient become a statistic, not any old statistic, but a chartistic. Oh happy you, ignorant but happy you. And the three sisters in the Marie Curie Research Wing at M.V.H. are very pleased to see you - lovely girls, by the way. Now, having been enrolled as a volunteer (albeit an involuntary one - work that out) off you go to M.V.H. where you engage in a great deal of activity, which mostly involves getting undressed, re-dressed, undressed and so on. All my zips and buttons remained calm under this untoward activity, in spite of the frequency of this caper. The most amazing and trying experience is a CT Scan, (Computerised Tomography) which involves one being inserted into something euphemistically called 'The Doughnut'. There's no jam, you are the jam. This machine, about one million quidsworth I imagine, takes lots of X-ray pictures slice by

slice of your body. If one suffers from claustrophobia in any degree -- but I won't go into that, nevertheless, I was very relieved when 45 minutes later the young man said enough was enough -- I thought so too.

One emerges from this experience with tattoos in strategic places. Only later does the reason for this establishment of one's body appear. (No, I won't show you mine) The real fun and games begins when someone has digested all the information about you and decided you are fit enough to be 'Charted'. I gather you have to be reasonably fit and judging by the amount of blood taken from me to test for my fitness, it is a wonder I managed to crawl along for the first session of Chart. Then comes the shock -- Chart is continuous more or less. One is scheduled for 12 days of this, no breaks, no week-end golf or a quick whipround the track or happy couple of hours in the workshop. No, 12 days straight off and just to confound your metabolic routine, three times a day at 8 a.m., 2 p.m., 8 p.m.. (8 a.m. Ugh! the middle of the night for me!). All that messes up any thoughts of skiving off to play in between time because each session takes about an hour including before and after odds and ends, and including approximately 15 minutes in the Linear Accelerator (that is the half a million quidsworth, or maybe a million, gadget which does the bombardment of gamma rays - X-rays - on one's delicate person. You only realise how delicate you person is until someone starts mucking about with it!).

Because of the time scale of the treatment there are teams of R.Gs. (radiographers). I think four teams on L.A. No. 4. They all seemed like girls just out of school and there they were happily operating this most expensive gadget and so confidently, it scared me stiff. All that expensive stuff and I put my life in their young hands! And hands reminds me. There you are, stripped to the waist - or whatever - no details - arms resting across the top of your baffled head, and the purpose of the tattoos on your body becomes clear, these are so that you can be positioned precisely under the L.A. thing. And precision means just that, or not quite our idea. Not to the nearest thou as we would have but to the nearest milli-metre or less. Four teams, different girls, different shifts and, to put you in exactly the right position you have to be pushed, prodded, eased or otherwise -- relax please and leave it to us, so you do - leave it to them. And you won't believe it, but in each shift of two or three R.Gs. there is ALWAYS one with ICY cold hands! No need to say how you feel when these Arctic fingers gently land on your very sensitive body. At least all is ready. Measurements taken of your tattoos in relation to the half million quidsworth; Don't move!! Check and check again. The lights go out, a rapid rat-a-tat-tat of heels on the floor as the R.Gs. remove themselves to behind the shield and -- The worst happens!

You are lying on the hard plain slab under the said half a million with your forearms resting across the top of your head, you have been told (commanded!) DON'T move, you are b****y uncomfortable, you hear the switch go on, the rumbling buzz of the half a million starts up and you have an uncontrollable diabolical itch on the end of your nose! Or, in the case of Reg, the chap before me, somewhere more intimate. DON'T move! The R.Gs. don't want their bombardment to be on other than where their plan of your body indicates, the relative part, that is. I liked that, as a model engineer, I appreciate the need for a plan to work to.

The booklet says RT is painless, and so it is, you feel nothing. The only discomfort is lying on the slab, like a side of uncured pork, absolutely still, arms above your head and, believe you me, for 15 minutes or so, that is very wearying indeed. There are no side effects, so the booklet says. And there aren't. But there are after effects which are different. You have to infer these from the booklet. Depending on the area of bombardment, you can have some 'passing' troubles; in my case, a difficulty in swallowing is one and I have some goo to help that and that has some side

effect, I suspect. Soft foods are recommended, (I've even got a booklet on a suitable diet including recipes). Soft = Sludge! No smoking, Natch and no spirits. No? No? definitely N-O. It is quite simple, obey the rules (their rules) and M.V.H. do not worry about you. Disobey and it is no good suing M.V.H for a half a million -- it's all your own fault. See ?! I saw. Verboten stays verboten and the only glimmer of hope on the horizon is the Doc's promise to let me know when it is safe to resume nightcapping when it is Christmas. I breathed in relief.

Me, being me, I asked questions. Having killed off a lot of ill humoured tumour, what, I asked, happens to deceased rubbish! Oh, the body gets rid of it naturally. Well, it seems there are a couple of exits for the defunct rubbish. You can cough it up and get rid of it, some of it, or there is another exit, but I delicately will not go in to that. Perhaps I have not put that very well, better I should say I won't comment on that end of the business except to mention I have invested in a couple of those aerosol air-fresheners. Even I am sensitive to atmosphere!.

There was one patient in our party of four, old Kitty, she looked about 70 plus, in a wheelchair and cheerful. And she made us three others quite humble. She had been having RT on and off for 25 years and could still smile! Very re-assuring to us, that was.

As I write this, I am in the middle of the post-Chart course course. Eh?! That is just what I said - Eh?! What it means is that I have had the Chart course and there follows six weeks of attendance, (every Monday morning) for examination, X-rays, sundry poking and prodding and that is the post course thing. After that there are further visits for check up at stated intervals over eight weeks. From then on every three months for two years you have further checks.

I mentioned to the Doc that I was 74 and by the time the whole business was over -- Oh, but after the two years we still keep an eye on you! Well, said I, they have more confidence in my longevity than I have! What happens, I asked, if that Bloke Up There says come on in you've had your time and it's good-bye? Oh, don't worry about that, we're not worried. Very confidence making, I thought. I must mention the questionnaires. So far, I have completed three of them. They are what I call computer friendly, that is a series of questions and tick the appropriate box. That is so the brainless computer gets it all in a nice tidy statistical fashion. No grey areas; about 50 questions per issue; four boxes per question, graded like this -- 'Is your appetite affected since the treatment' Tick the relevant box -- 'Not at all'; 'Very little'; 'Sometimes'; 'A lot'. Get the picture? The question which gets the biggest hoot from all, is -- 'Has your sexual activity been affected?' The usual four boxes tick as appropriate. The Research Sister said in response to my query, I'm 74, what --? Put down - not at all. She refused to say how she knew! Perhaps it was because she was pretty. Or something. Anyway, there was no box for Wishful thinking.

My message to fellow model engineers who may find themselves faced with the question - to be or not to be? - is fairly simple, have a bash. There's nowt to fear, you merely have to do as you are told. That helps a great deal even if it is unusual for some of us. Chart is painless, or at least no worse than convincing the wife your lathe is clapped out and you need a new one. You never know, you might get one as a sort of consolation. Wishful thinking ?? (A new lathe I mean, not a new wife).

Laurie

Dunstable Beds
21 Sept '93

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+++++OBITUARY+++++

I am sorry to report that we lost Mrs Wallis in the middle of November. Mr and Mrs Wallis did a great deal for the society during their lifetimes and even after the death of Mr Wallis a few years ago Mrs Wallis gave much of her time on Sundays to man the ticket office for us. She will be greatly missed as a friend to us all and our sympathy is sent to her children and grandchildren.

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SUE'S SPOT

Greetings one and all. Thanks to my contributors for this issue - John Barrow, Peter Jackson and Laurie Lawrence - and to Bob Hodgkins who did some of the printing for me. But I remain sorely in need of articles. Closing date for next issue is March 27th but please feel free to write something now!

So what has everyone been doing then? Well in September, our Secretary Martin won the annual award at the Southern Federation Autumn Rally for his latest engine, a 5" gauge Duchess of Hamilton. In October we had a lovely day at Birchley thanks to Dummond and Jennifer Randall and the following weekend a crowd of us went to the Midlands Exhibition by coach and had a good look around. November we had the hot dog and night run - it is sad that we seem to see fewer and fewer engines enjoying an evening run. Still there was plenty of people and the hot dogs were wolfed down incredibly fast along with the toasted cheese rolls. It was nice to see George Barlow again at the beginning of this month looking very fit and with a super and varied selection of slides of his travels to show us.

Although we have officially finished running it was decided at a recent committee meeting that if any passed drivers wanted to run and take passengers in the winter then providing there were sufficient members present to make this possible they could go ahead. Meanwhile winter works continue with concrete supports still to be made for parts of the track, more wedges to be set, the odd kink in the track to be sorted out, fencing, pavement, painting.....and in the spring some more concrete beams to be cast as we now have none spare. So there is plenty to do as always.

Gate opening : Boxing Day Run and British Summer Time Sundays 11 to 11-30 and 2 to 2-30; winter Sundays 11 to 11-30 only and best to ring a regular committee member if coming for something specific. Friday evenings the gate is manned from 7-15 until 7-45. I have tried to see if we can get any more keys for our members and I rang the council recently about this, but I did not get an encouraging reception as they seem reluctant to release any more keys to anyone. But I shall keep trying every so often and keep you posted.

The committee has recently clarified the Byelaws regarding young drivers on the track at Mote Park. Under sixteen year old drivers are only allowed to operate when no passengers are being carried on the track AND where the adult tutor sitting directly behind is able to take control of the locomotive if necessary. In effect this limits junior drivers to locomotives without tenders. This change in the Byelaws will be ratified at the next AGM.

DIARY DATES 1993 INTO 1994

Sunday December 26th : Boxing Day Run.
Friday January 7th : Video and Crumpet Night.
Friday February 4th : Guest Speaker.
Friday March 4th : Annual General Meeting.
Sunday March 27th : Public Running.
Friday April 1st : Bits'n'Chips'n'Fish'n'Pieces Evening.
Monday May 1st : Club Celebration (provisional date).

WHAT'S TO COME :

Boxing Day we celebrate Christmas at the Clubhouse with our cold turkey and a drop of something warming. Or tea as the case may be. Do join us with your lunch and assist with giving the kids a festive steam train ride in the afternoon (weather and sobriety permitting).

January Club Night on the 7th is Video Night and if anyone gets a good video for Christmas that they think everyone will enjoy, then please bring it along. I do hope none of you got the wrong idea about the crumpet bit (or video come to that) because I do of course mean the toasted kind with butter and a cup of tea.

February Club Evening on the 4th we will have a guest speaker; if you don't like surprises and wish to know who it is then just get in touch before the event, a poster will be put on the Club Noticeboard in plenty of time. But please try and come in particular when we have a guest as it is nicer for them to have a large audience rather than a small one.

March Club Night also on the 4th is the Annual General Meeting at the Clubhouse. Will it be a long one or can we rocket through the agenda in twenty minutes? Be prompt so that you do not miss anything!

The last Sunday in March is when the clocks go forward which is traditionally our first public running day. For the not so keen or maybe not so hardy (or is it foolhardy) this will probably still remain the starting date for the season.

Friday April 1st is the Bits and Pieces and Fish and Chips Evening as well as being Good Friday. Always popular, feel free to bring the family along to join in.

Monday May 1st, what is all the fuss about a Club Celebration? Well, it is our 55th year and in particular it is our Presidents Golden Wedding Anniversary so we want to lay on a bit of a do at the Clubhouse for Jack and Joy. This is to be a surprise to them as I've left this bit out of Jack's newsletter, they are just aware we are celebrating 55 years of the Club. So more details in the Spring Newsletter, but in the meantime please keep that date free to join us and don't tell Jack and Joy!

So that just about sums up the next few months ahead. Hope to see as many of you as can join us.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Suzanne' or similar, with a large, stylized initial 'S' and a long horizontal stroke.