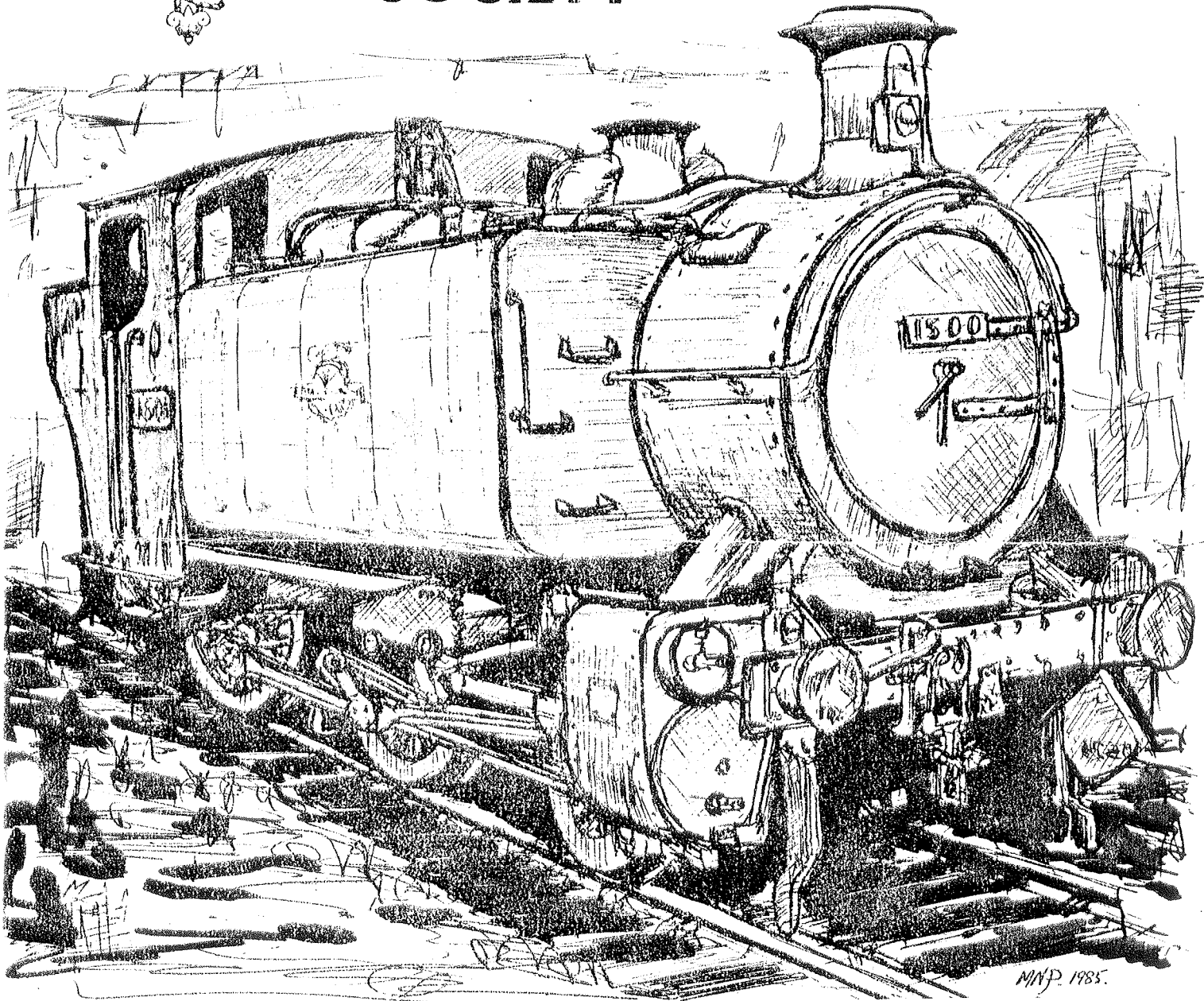


MAIDSTONE MODEL ENGINEERING SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER - Winter 1985

"THE CLUB LOCO"

I expect one or two of our more artistically minded members are wondering what the peculiar beast was adorning the front page of the Autumn Newsletter, this can be blamed on my low artistic ability but it is generally meant to represent "The Club Loco".

If you happen to wander into the workshop on a Sunday you will see the current progress being made by our usual band of dedicated slaves.

The thinking and engineering facts about this project are as follows:

For some time it has been considered by the Committee that we have been very vulnerable to the lack of motive power that occurs on some Sundays and our general lack of a suitable hack loco for driver training, a steam loco was reluctantly ruled out as the first requirement is for a loco that is instantly available, an electric loco, although simple, was ruled out as these generally, with a few notable exceptions, lack the power we would require for what could be a 3 hour stint on a Sunday afternoon, this only left the dreaded petrol stink motor. Once this decision was made a volunteer for design was nailed to a drawing board until he had produced sufficient rough sketch drawings for the project to get started.

The "loco" can be described as follows, it will be very heavy for maximum use of available power. Hence the main frames are from 6" x $\frac{1}{4}$ " steel plate, wheels are turned from 6" steel blanks and axles from $1\frac{1}{2}$ " diameter bar. The frames being outside the wheels in traditional narrow gauge practice, means that we will have a very large loco. Outside fly cranks and the traditional drive from a jackshaft with connecting and coupling rods means that the loco will look a bit more interesting on the move than the more modern box on wheels.

The power house we are going to use to lug this pile of steel round the track is the old faithful lawn mower engine produced for the Suffolk Colt. These engines are quite reliable and should produce ample power for our requirements. Drive will be through a centrifugal clutch and $\frac{1}{2}$ " pitch chain, into a countershaft. Final drive from the countershaft onto the jackshaft is again via a $\frac{1}{2}$ " pitch chain. For reason of simplicity it has been decided, at this stage, not to fit any means of reversing but this could be fitted at a later stage if necessary.

All the main axles will be fitted with sealed ball races and the working life between refits is anticipated to be long and arduous.

We will be fitting a headlamp, the usual audible warning of approach, i.e. he-haw, and, finally, a steam type chimney just to keep me happy and to pass the usual foul smelling pong straight up the driver's nose.

Finally, was there a beast like this that wandered the rails, most certainly, they were in production by Hudswell Clarke, Andrew Barclay and W.G.Bagnall Ltd. around about 1930 - 1940 and really spelt the death knell for our old friend the contractors steam loco.

GRAHAM KIMBER

INSPECTING LOCOMOTIVE TYPE BOILERS

Some years ago the Vulcan Engineering Insurance Group published the following details concerning the problems and common defects found on locomotive boilers.

It is quoted here, not just because it is most interesting in its own right, but to assist us to offer a sigh of relief, should we have a spot of bother with our own engines - that they are not full size spots of bother.

"Locomotive type boilers, considering the small space occupied, produce large quantities of steam at pressure up to 250 lbs/square inch". The fundamental design has altered little since its inception over a century ago, whether for main-line passenger work, shunting engines, road rollers, traction engines or road haulage vehicles.

Loco type boilers have many inaccessible areas where inspection is concerned, and so hydraulic test with the lagging removed is needed more often than in other types of steam boiler. Other supplements to thorough examinations are inspections with the boiler stripped of all lagging and out of the loco frame, removal of saddle or side tanks where fitted and, in the case of stationary boilers where the firebox foundation ring is set on brick supports, selected portions of brickwork removed from time to time.

The barrel of traction engine boilers provides the engine mounting, a doubling plate being fitted to give support. This plate should be exposed at intervals by removing the engine. Smoke tube removal for sectioning and close inspection and drill testing of plates are further supplements.

Before a thorough examination a periodic removal of the lagging may be required, but in any case the boiler would be opened up and cleaned internally by removal of washout plugs located in the firebox casing plates and the smoke box tube plate. Small oval doors are often fitted rather than screwed plugs. In some designs a mud pocket is riveted to the barrel bottom in the trailing plate and/or the inspection door in the upper part, sometimes large enough to permit entry when tubes are removed for renewal. Where a steam dome is fitted the cover would be removed.

On the external side the firebox would be made accessible and cleaned, the smoke box would be swept clean and the tubes thoroughly brushed through.

The boiler would now be ready for the surveyor and he may begin his inspection by examining the boiler internally, starting with the firebox wrapper, firehole and tube plates, together with the casing and throat plates. A probe torch is useful in this location; a mirror attachment affords views of otherwise inaccessible surfaces. An oil-soaked wad torch or a candle on a telescopic holder is sometimes used; either gives a surprisingly comprehensive lighting effect in the cavities between the plates.

The supporting stays, about 7/8" diameter, are pitched approximately 4" - 5" apart in vertical and horizontal rows, screwed through both plates and riveted over in the type of boiler under discussion. They will be carefully examined for necking or complete breakage, and a chisel-ended bar of convenient length is often used to chip gently at the junction between plates and stay.

The colour of the plate and stay is significant; a fine red or black line often indicates a broken stay. If the junction is broadly discoloured judicious chipping will often reveal severe corrosion in necked form, so reducing the stay diameter that renewal is necessary. If the adjacent plate is wasted in annular form the threads may be insufficient to support the plate, although if the stay head is sound this provides some support (Fig. 1). Stay and adjacent plate defects will generally be more severe in upper stay rows due to differential expansion between the firebox and casing plates.

The plates will be examined for pitting, blotching and general wastage. Corrosion in channel form will be searched for at the junction between plates and foundation ring (Fig. 2).

Grooving defects also appear in vertical flangings of the casing plates and in the heel of the throat plate flanging to the barrel. The barrel and throat plate seam will be examined for the usual seam defects. A portion of the tube plate can be seen in this location and it will be examined for scale accumulations around the tubes, general corrosion, pitting, wasting at tube holes and ligament cracks. The tubes at the junction with the tube plates may also be reduced in diameter and this can be serious because the tubes are little more than 1/8" thick when new.

In some designs, support is provided for the area of tube plate between lower tube row and upper stay row by a palm stay. This component is difficult to examine and is most usually percussion tested with a bar passed through one of the cleaning holes.

In the space between the firehole plates the defects common to plates, stays and foundation ring areas mentioned above will be sought and particular attention will be given to the parts forming the firehole opening. If these are flanged, grooving and radial cracks across the root are quite common defects. Where the block ring method of attachment is used defects similar to those associated with foundation rings could be present together with cracks radiating outwards from the block which may eventually break through.

Transferring attention to the external parts of the firebox and firebox casing plates, the inspection openings will be examined. Wastage at the edges of mudholes, inspection holes and on the spigot edges of doors is a potentially dangerous defect which could result in a door joint blowing out, so the doors will be tried in the holes to ensure a good spigot fit and examined to ensure they are of sufficient thickness to withstand the loading imposed both by internal pressure and the tightening of the stud nut. The studs, dogs and nuts will be examined to ensure that studs in doors are sound, that stud and nut threads are in order, and that dogs are not distorted. If screwed plugs are used the plug and hole threads will be examined and search made for fine cracks at the edges of the holes and the plugs tried in the holes.

Examination of the firebox plates on the fireside will be the next step because it is important to relate defects noted internally with those externally, particularly on the exact opposite side of the plate. Smooth wasting of the plates and stay heads is probably the most common defect found on the fireside, particularly so at firebar level in some solid fuel fired boilers (Fig. 3). If conditions warrant, the plates will be drill tested to establish thicknesses beyond doubt.

Distortion of plates may be present and the form of any such distortion has significance. For instance, a "quilted" form could indicate that plates are thinning, or if proved of full thickness by drill test, that overheating is taking place due either to flame impingement or excessive scale on the water side.

If distortion is in broad "contour" form, sounding of stays or sample removal would show these to be broken (Fig. 4).

Distortion on a flat type of furnace crown plate is particularly serious because scale deposits collect in the depressions on the water side. The tube ends would be examined for leakage, cracking of extensions, leakage through tube walls and general wastage and burning of ends. The prodding tool would be inserted into selected tubes, judicious levering giving some indication of wall thickness. To complete the tube examination these will be sighted, the shape of the hole being distorted when tubes have "sagged" or "hogged".

At the other end of the tubes, in the smoke box, the same procedure will be carried out and the tube plate, shell extension, riveted seam and cleaning hole edges examined. Tube hole ligament cracks will be sought, although this is a defect more usually found in the firebox tube plate.

Some method of staying is necessary to support the upper parts of the smoke box tube plate and firehole casing plate and longitudinal bar stays between the plates, or girder type stiffeners, are most generally used. These supports would be carefully examined both inside and outside, hammer tested and measured to ensure that no reduction due to corrosion was taking place. Where girder stays are fitted the rivet heads would be hammer tested, these having the important role of holding the girder firmly to the plate so that it can properly perform its supporting function.

Internal examination of the barrel lower part at the front end of the leading ring can be made through washout holes in the smoke box tube plate; a limited view of the tubes is also possible, giving an indication of the general condition. Manual probing will reveal any wasting on the lower part of the tube plate and along the barrel; deposits tending to collect in this area.

Where a mud pocket is fitted the upper and lower flangings internally will be carefully examined. The lower flange is particularly prone to corrosion if corrosive elements are present in the boiler water supply.

If a steam dome is fitted a limited view of the tubes can be had while the dome, together with its seams, is being examined. If the boiler is on a loco the steam strainer and regulating valve will further restrict access. Examination of the firebox crown and supporting stays will be made from inspection openings in the upper parts of the firebox casing plates or in the upper part of the barrel. Such examination is supplemented by manual probing and sounding with a chisel-ended bar. In some boilers it is possible to reach the knuckle of the firebox firehole plate flanging to the wrapper plates. This area is prone to corrosion in channel form and if undetected will progress to penetration.

If the boiler is lagged at the time of the inspection a search of the whole will be made for bulges, cracks, salts and dampness. All these defects often indicate trouble of some kind. The lagging would be removed for close investigation of concealed suspect parts. In particular, the underside of the barrel will be scrutinised, as this area, as mentioned previously, is susceptible to internal wasting. External wastage due to leakage from circumferential seams at lower parts coupled with internal wastage is a serious combination.

If the boiler is not lagged the surveyor will examine and hammer-test all parts, bearing in mind his findings from internal inspection. Stays will be sounded, a helper bearing on the opposite end with a hammer. If a stay

has parted the gap between cannot transmit the reaction between strike and bearing hammer. There is, however, the case where a stay, usually recently broken, has not parted and such a defective stay offers a reaction similar to a sound one. This is one of the reasons for comparatively frequent hydraulic testing of loco boilers. The accompanying deflection tests would reveal a broken stay.

In conclusion, the most important inspections can be those of parts normally inaccessible for inspection. For instance, the entire boiler should be examined when lagging, seating or refractory brickwork, tanks or engines are removed or the boiler is out of its frame; ideally such examination should be supplemented by hydraulic test. The barrel should be examined, before retubing, with the old tubes out.

D.S.P.

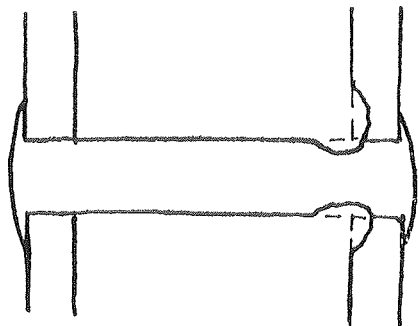


FIG. 2. CORROSION IN CHANNEL FORM AT JUNCTION OF FIREBOX AND FOUNDATION RING

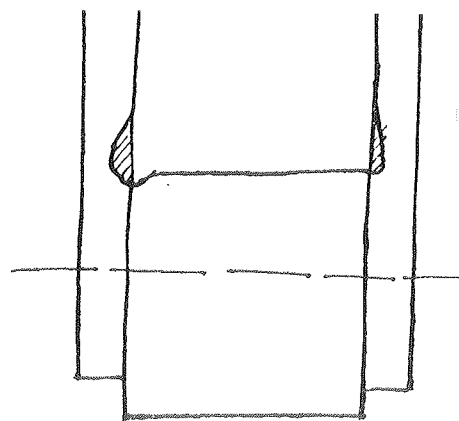


FIG. 1. "NECKING" OF FIREBOX STAY & PLATE WASTAGE IN ANNULAR FORM

FIG. 3. SMOOTH WASTING. THE HATCHED PORTION HAS WASTED OR BURNED AWAY NOTE STAY HEAD REDUCTION

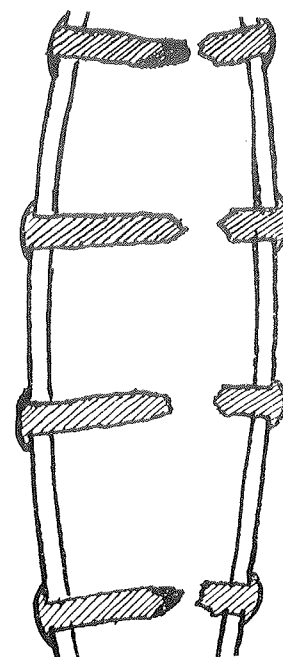
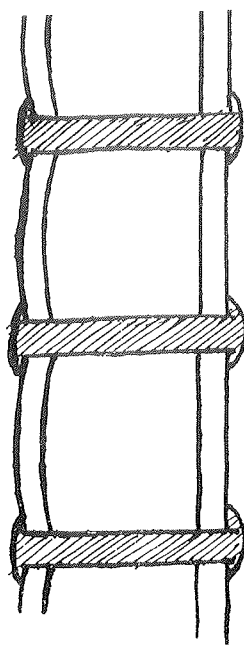
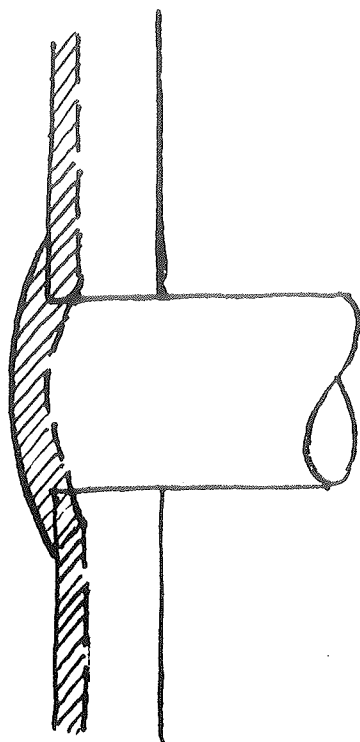


FIG. 4. DISTORTION IN "QUILTED" AND "CONTOUR" FORM.

SUE'S SPOT.

Unfortunately there is no article from Jim Ewins this time as he has been struck down by flu (and his new word processor). May we wish him a speedy recovery.

Some of our longer standing members may think that the item by Don Paterson sounds vaguely familiar. This is in fact reprinted from a 1973 newsletter which Don felt would be of interest to those who have not seen it before.

My thanks to all those who have contributed to the newsletter this year in any way. I shall of course be highly delighted to receive articles from ANYONE for the newsletters - do remember that they do not have to be confined to the world of model engineering. Closing date for the Spring 1986 Newsletter is the date of the A.G.M. Friday March 7th.

Autumn Rundown :

The running season finished with a couple of fine Sundays and a lovely large show of engines from our members to help boost the years takings after the rather poor summer. The October Video Evening was a Maidstone Model Engineering Society Parham/Gurr Production which included a Trip on the Severn Valley Railway, installation of the new soakaway and finished with a humorous musical compilation which was generally appreciated by all, including those singled out for attention! Having been involved I am of course totally unbiased when I say how extremely good it was...(!!!). Doug Lindsay from the Kent and East Sussex Railway came to entertain us in November, recounting more history of the Tenterden line. Also in November it was the Golden Wedding Anniversary of Reg and Louie Holdstock and we were able to lay on a "do" at the Clubhouse to celebrate the occasion on Sunday November 24th. This important happening was recorded on video and will no doubt be shown some time next year. Many thanks to all who contributed to making the day a special one for Reg and Louie, and I know they appreciated very much all your kind thoughts. In December Trevor Spooner showed us his videos on Torry Hill at Sittingbourne, a private track in Benfleet and the Ffestiniog Railway. All the club nights are well worth attending and it is great to see such a number of members taking an interest.

While I am on the subject of events at the Clubhouse, the council have now put a gate at the end of the road to the Clubhouse which is secured by padlock from dusk until dawn. Keys to the gate have been issued to members of the committee only, and when a person leaves the committee their key will be handed on to their successor. As far as the club nights are concerned, the gate will be open approximately thirty minutes before the evening is scheduled to begin and will be closed at the time the show starts. Those members who are late will have to park their cars by the lake or elsewhere and walk up. If you have any queries on this subject, please contact any committee member.

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WANTED : For the club, steel scaffold poles 5' in length and 3/8" steel water pipe in any lengths. Plans are afoot to tidy up our compound further with more fencing.

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*Please return any magazines that you borrow from the Clubhouse. They are for the benefit of all the members and while it is permissible for anyone to borrow them, please do not hold onto them forever! There are a number of Railway Gazettes which appear to have been missing for some time, their return in the near future will be appreciated.*

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Heading into Spring 1986

Thursday December 26th : Boxing Day Run.

Friday January 3rd : Talk and Slide Show by George Barlow at 7.30 p.m.

Friday February 7th : Talk and Slide Show by Ray Milliken at 7.30 p.m.

Friday March 7th : Annual General Meeting at 7.30 p.m.

Friday April 5th : Video Evening at 7.30 p.m.

Friday May 2nd : To be arranged.

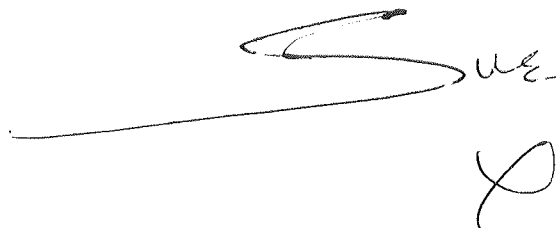
Saturday May 17th : Trip on the Wealden Pullman, Kent and East Sussex Railway, Tenterden, at 7.30 p.m.

On Boxing Day will be the usual Christmas Run for the public in the afternoon. Now is a good time to remind all engine drivers to exercise caution on the track at all times.

All club nights are of course held on the first Friday of each month.

The new year brings us George Barlow to talk of steam in Britain throughout 1985 with slides to illustrate this year. In February Ray Milliken will be giving us an account of his adventures in Japan in 1977. It was only in the course of conversation that we discovered that Ray had not regaled us with the story of the International Miniature Locomotive Festival, so we are looking forward to hearing about it now. The A.G.M. in March will be held in the Clubhouse again - if it is a bit of a squeeze at least it will be cosy! In April the video evening material has yet to be arranged, it may well be an outside presenter again. Further details will appear on the Club Noticeboard nearer the time. In May another trip has been arranged on the Kent and East Sussex Railway. A superb meal with wine is included in the price of £17-50. The date is Saturday May 17th, commencing at 7.30 p.m. and finishing at approximately 11 p.m. Tickets are limited. I am afraid that you have to book your seats early as the Club has to pay a deposit in the New Year. Therefore, please submit a holding deposit of £5 per person to me by Sunday January 15th to ensure your place. The remainder of the monies are to be paid to me by the A.G.M. [March 7th].

May I wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year and I look forward to seeing you all soon.

Sue

TWO ATTEMPTS AT MARGATE

This is the story of two attempts to get to Margate, in 1984 and 1985 by Model Steam Waggon from Quex Park, Birchington. Margate Pier was the stated destination showing the first bit of nostalgia as the pier fell to pieces in a storm years ago. The remains have proved something of a problem. Efforts to remove it have included blowing it up by the army, cutting it up a'la Barry Island without complete success, perhaps removal by M.M.E.S. for the metal is the answer!

In fact the destination was the 'Harbour' which is just a dent in the sea wall adjacent to the pier remains.

Quex Park, meanwhile is a delightful spot 6 - 7 miles inland (well it would be) a perfect venue for a Steam Rally held each August Bank Holiday.

On the Saturday of the holiday a road run is arranged, for steam engines only, to the aforementioned destination.

Despite not having at that time all the required number plates, tax discs etc. I was invited to join in as it was a police supervised cavalcade which seemed to make it alright.

Saturday dawned bright and sunny and about ten full size engines were getting ready which takes anything up to four hours. Additionally three models were also under preparation. A six inch scale Foster S/C traction engine, a six inch Foden compound wagon and my six inch Fowler waggon.

By ten o'clock everyone was ready and by eleven o'clock after umpteen attempts and lots of whistle blowing and policemen dashing about with walkie talkies we were off, launched into the unsuspecting holiday traffic led by the Foster towing a trailer full of elated passengers already examining the insides of the tins of liquid refreshments.

During this endless waiting period my fireman (Charlie Hayward of Mote Park fame) and I were wrestling to keep the engine in 'go' conditions. For those who don't know my machine it has a vertical boiler some 33" high and 16" dia. fed with coal via a central shute. This arrangement makes it very difficult to fire, (even harder when travelling) without banging your head on the roof supports, singeing your hair and eyebrows whilst engulfed in thick smoke. Charlie had not even been in my waggon until that day when Margaret wisely declined the job of fireman so it was doubly difficult for him.

Keeping a model in peak condition for an hour on the starting grid is almost impossible but we set off in fine style with 'her indoors' and a couple of children in the back waving enthusiastically to the passers by.

All went well until Westgate came into view. Margaret and children waving, Charlie visibly relaxed now having come to terms with injectors, pumps etc. We now had a huge fire, full pressure and were tearing along at a steady 8 - 10 m.p.h. This modest speed was enough to spread the field somewhat, only the Foden model close behind and a full size Foden in front with Foster model leading. Consider the scene - engine running perfectly, cloudless sky,

sea in the distance - Margate, the magic mecca of the South East complete with hostelryes await our arrival. Just a minute though, what was that odd vibration? Couldn't be the road surface, Steve Davis could play on it.

There it goes again, must be Margaret and the children jumping about (she is given to this sort of activity). The next time the vibration was more violent followed by a sudden list to Starboard. When I saw the two offside road wheels roll gently past us doubtless making their own way to Mecca I realised something was fairly seriously wrong! Happily, if that's the right word under the circumstances the water tank holding some twenty-four gallons hit the ground near where the wheels used to be reducing the list to a reasonable angle and no one was thrown overboard. We came to a stop fairly quickly the tank being square not acting too successfully as a wheel.

Driver, fireman and passengers alighted uninjured to examine the damage and recover the runaway parts. The tank bravely saving us from injury was alas fatally wounded and deposited its life blood promptly in the gutter. The boiler, not supplying any steam anywhere and being choc-a-bloc with coal lifted its safety valve violently.

This presented a further problem as we now had no water. It was about this time that I decided philately was probably a more suitable hobby for me. Back to the job in hand there was nothing for it but to empty the firebox immediately, this action promptly set the tarmac alight and because we were going up hill at the time of the disaster the water from the broken tank was running away not toward the conflagration. After contemplating philately for the second time, Charlie and I got all under control and considered what to do next. All four wheel studs had broken flush with the hub - no roadside repair possible this time, but how would we get back to Quex Park? Then a voice said 'can I help Ray, my car is round the corner' Charlie and I looked skyward - but it was Ken Rose M.M.E.S. member who was photographing the engines from a traffic island. He took Margaret back to Quex to get the trailer whilst we managed to get the runaway wheels back in place sufficient to load the waggon on the trailer.

Whilst we were thus engaged David Chalk (M.M.E.S.) appeared on the scene being official observer for the event and having not observed us he came to see what was wrong "Get the waggon back to Quex" said David "I'll meet you there this afternoon with some new wheel studs and an oxyacetylene outfit to repair the tank". This we did, he did, and other did and by the time the other participants returned my little waggon was repaired even the tank painted enabling us to take part in the rest of the Rally. So minimal was the damage that Les Nelson's Foden and my Fowler won a prize on the Monday for the Best Models.

A consolation for missing out on the road run and a credit to all those who helped me get over the troubles.

The Reader can imagine how much amusement my wheels falling off gave to everyone on the Steam Engine Grapevine which meant that by August Bank Holiday, 1985 my reputation, if I ever had one as a steam engine builder, was definitely on the line. This time everything was checked over and

over again. Her indoors personally queried every adjustment. A new water tank was constructed, the original proving troublesome after 1984's misadventure. The water pump was rebuilt as were check valves, water gauge, superheater, front axle and a second gearbox was fitted giving a crankshaft to wheel ratio of 1.8 : 1 in top allowing a speed of approximately 20 m.p.h. at 700 r.p.m.

All seemed ready, Bank Holiday Saturday dawned and no one it seemed had forgotten the fiasco of the last year and were all agog to see what would befall me this time.

When I write Saturday dawned it was difficult to tell, the mist was so thick and the rain so heavy, perhaps it was nearer the truth to say it was lighter than night-time but little more. All around us when Margaret and I awoke in our tent were engine owners and drivers making ready. In an hour or so we were waiting to go. New fireman this time, Robert, a fourteen year old well used to firing a traction engine and very keen to do well. Charlie, fireman of last year was this year steersman on a twenty-two ton Ploughing Engine which was to follow us in the order of running.

Right at the moment of setting off (the rain had now stopped) after the flurry of activity from organisers and police the Foster Traction Engine disappeared with a whoosh in a cloud of steam. He was to lead the cavalcade again but had blown a fusible plug and was sadly out of the running.

Barry McCabe, the leader of the event, promptly transferred to our little waggon bringing his walkie-talkie and six dozen cans of the 'engine mans best friend' this 1985 version reaches parts even tea can't manage. Off at last, six on board now, thirty gallons of water and a hundred weight of coal, us leading followed by the ploughing engine into the holiday traffic. When we came to the first roundabout the police stopped all the traffic for twenty minutes to let the smoking clanking monsters on to the main road. The children who thronged the pavements enjoyed the spectacle immensely as indeed we did. The motorists however were not quite so enchanted as the children, calling out less politely and waving to us in a quite different fashion.

Soon we approached Westgate and on safely passing the dreaded spot gave quick eyes left and saluted in true Churchillian style amid whistles from our compatriots. Margate was soon in view suitably decorated for the summer with rows of yellow lines along every kerb and obelisk with lots of smiling bobbies allowing us to park right on the seafront.

We were then asked to line up outside the shops and ice cream parlours. The whole area was soon engulfed in smoke and soot so it was not long before we set off to find a hostelry with parking for steam engines, the six dozen cans having been consumed.

Ninety minutes later the police asked us if we would kindly hurry up so that they could escort us safely through the worst of the traffic congestion back to our haven in Quex.

After lunch the engines went quite a bit faster and seemed to negotiate the narrow roads much more easily, so after testing a couple of fine hydrants and a flat dash along the final half mile we were back safely and my thoughts turned from stamp collecting back to 'what shall we make next!'

XMAS 1985 - Ray Milliken.

Distance covered approximately 13 miles
Water consumed approximately 36 gallons
Coal consumed approximately 50 lbs
Time taken in all 5 hours

N.B. From 'er indoors'

I would like to take this opportunity (having typed the previous article written by 'im in his playpen') to thank everyone for their help, support and telephone calls during the past ten months. I very much appreciated the kindness and would like you to know how much it all helped.

Have a Happy Christmas and Peaceful New Year.

Love Margaret

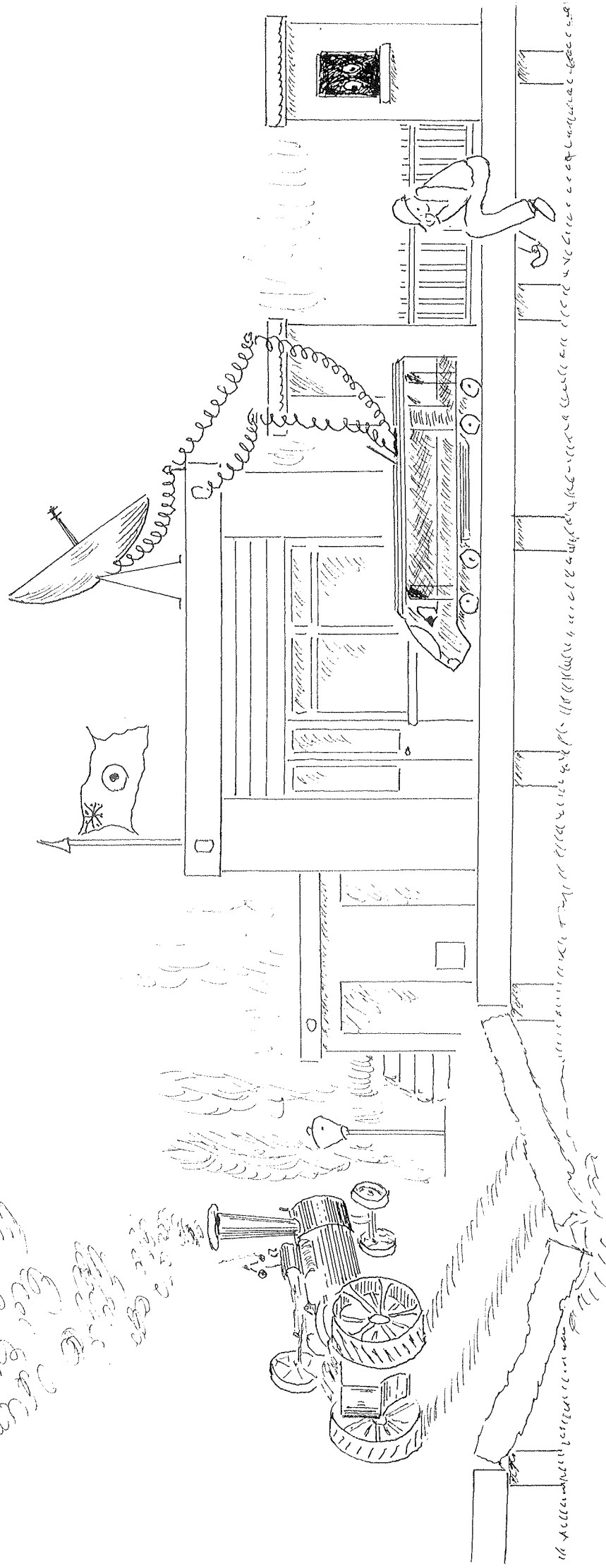
PASSED DRIVERS.

There is a list on the Club Noticeboard of members passed fit to drive in respect of carrying the general public. For those uninitiated who wish to join this elite squad, the format is fairly simple. When you feel confident driving a steam locomotive, and other members, particularly those on the committee have seen you driving, and it is considered that you are capable in this respect, then it is up to you to apply in writing to the committee. Once your application has been approved, you are designated as qualified and your name is added to the list. You then join the band of intrepid Sunday afternoon traffic haulers. Simple, isn't it? Mrs Rita Williams [who is good at drawing.....], we do not appear to have received your letter yet.....

MAIDSTONE MODEL ENGINEERING SOCIETY OFFICERS 1985

PRESIDENT : A.H.W. Payne Esq. [Jack], 38 Oxford Road, Maidstone, Kent.
ME15 8DJ. Maidstone 57545.
CHAIRMAN : P.J.A. Chislett Esq. [Peter], 30 Manor Rise, Bearsted,
Maidstone, Kent. ME14 4DB. Maidstone 37407.
SECRETARY : M.N. Parham Esq. [Martin], Bramleys, Old Loose Hill,
Loose, Maidstone, Kent. ME15 0BS. Maidstone 44175.
TREASURER : P.A. Roots Esq. [Pete], 97, Tonbridge Road, Maidstone,
Kent. ME16 8JN. Maidstone 58599.
PRESS OFFICER : Mrs S. Gurr [Sue], 28, Claremont Road, Vinters Park
Estate, Maidstone, Kent. ME14 5LZ. Maidstone 678903.

Steam
Locomotive
No. 100



No charge for over gauge weight

