

# **MAIDSTONE MODEL ENGINEERING SOCIETY**

**Spring 2023**

**[www.maidstonemes.co.uk](http://www.maidstonemes.co.uk)**

**President - Martin Parham**

# Maidstone Model Engineering Society

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### Your Committee

The committee exists to serve the club, to look out for the clubs interests and to make decisions on behalf of the club and its members.

Each committee member has volunteered and been elected by the membership at the AGM.

We are your committee, if you would like a point raised, either write/email to Tom, or talk to one of us and we can raise an issue on your behalf.

Chairman - Chris Hawkins  
 Vice Chairman - Sue Parham  
 Secretary - Tom Parham  
 Treasurer - Edgar Playfoot  
 Press Officer - Luke Bridges  
 Pat Riddles  
 John Hawkins  
 Andrew Hulse  
 Chris Williams  
 Jack Ruler  
 Amy Bridges

Cover photo: Les with his Jubilee on a busy running day

# Luke's Ramblings

I don't really know where to begin, or end with this one.

This edition contains something I hoped to not have to print for a long time, if at all (page 31).

In other news I'm finally getting back to the workshop, Bantam Cock's boiler is almost sealed back up, Trojan is back on the bench after trying to embed glass in me and Tom P, and now getting her ready and played with for IMLEC (fingers crossed I get in again)

I will reiterate that it really is **your** submitted articles that make these newsletters come together, and so thank you to those who sent me pages to go in this edition.

You can give me pages as scribbles on paper, as an email, whatsapp message, work document, on usb stick - anyway you can get it to me I can use or make work. Even if its just some photos with notes they are so valuable to getting this together.

Is there anything you would like to see from the society, or an activity arranged, or a facility improved or provided that we don't currently have?

If so, just raise it with a committee member, or put a note in the red post box in the clubhouse - alternatively send an email to

[secretary@maidstonemes.co.uk](mailto:secretary@maidstonemes.co.uk)

With your suggestion, comment or idea



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And like our public page at [facebook.com/maidstonemes](https://facebook.com/maidstonemes)

# At the park

## General Works - Jack Ruler & Chris Williams

The new station sign is in the process of being made. New LED lights have been ordered. Leaves and brambles had been cleared around the track.

## Household and Catering - Sue Parham & Pat Riddles

The display is not working on the water heater. The club lunch went well. The water heater display was being troublesome to replace, consideration to be made to replace unit entirely.

## Public Running - Sue Parham & Chris Williams

The roster had been printed for this season. Boxing Day had gone well. Volunteers are required on the running log. The running log would be updated before the season.

## Safety - John Hawkins

Defibrillator paddles had been replaced and RA being reviewed.

## Permanent Way - Chris Williams

Nothing to report

## Fuel & Club Locos - Chris Hawkins

Both steam locos are ready for the season. Frenchie is now operational. Paraffin had been restocked. Petrol locos should have an oil change before the season.

## Rolling Stock - Amy & Luke Bridges

A new checklist had been made for checks. The trollies had been looked at, all sets had some issues, almost all are fit for use.

## Other business

HS2020 items to be considered...

- A fire plan should be considered, including assembly point.
- Track standards for maintenance should be recorded.
- A specification should be laid out for allowable tolerances. E.g. wheels, track, etc.
- Should non-steam have an annual fitness to run?
- Line of sight visibility on the climb past the overgrowth.
- Track signage e.g. Speed limit sign, limited clearance on the bridge?
- Visual inspections of locos before running.
- Parking brakes?
- Passenger loading instructions.
- Traffic controller signature?
- Traffic controller outside of public running?
- Location of flags if signals fail.
- Operational staff responsibilities and training.
- Maintenance log book.
- Track walk includes signals...?
- Link to members page behind a password for access to bylaws/rules/ Risk assessment etc?
- Fire extinguishers.
- COSHH requirements
- Provision of PPE
- Do we make known trained first aiders and train more if necessary?

# Chairman's Corner

Hi all, firstly, I would like to express my condolences to the families of Peter Kingsford, Andy Bridges and Paul Clark over the sad loss of these three very active members within the society and I am sure for many of us, I know I will, they will be very much missed.

Moving swiftly forward, I hope otherwise you are not all getting too wet or cold with our rather wet and indifferent weather we have had so far this year and are looking forward to the next running season that has just started.

I have a few things I would like to just mention this time round. It was great to see all that attended the Club Annual Dinner. I thought it was a pretty good turnout, considering how things have been over the last couple of years and the new venue seemed to be a success for those who attended. Though as some may have noticed, not being able to attend myself over the last few years, I had completely forgotten the need for a speech until Tom reminded me on the day, on arrival. Thanks for that Tom! But also, thanks to Pat and Sue for making all the arrangements for this to happen in the first place.

Moving on to other matters, I just wanted to let you know that there will be a few additional updates or changes over the coming weeks with how we operate as a club, as the Committee has been reviewing the HS2020 Safety Guide. This guide is designed to provide guidance in managing health and safety matters at Passenger Carrying Miniature Railways, produced by the PCMRSG (Passenger Carrying Miniature Railway Safety Group) and endorsed by the HSE. Essentially this is what the HSE would refer to if at any time it was felt there was a need for them to get involved in an accident or incident at the park.

This is considered guidance and the Committee has been reviewing it as such and with the view to not make things too complicated and/or restrictive for the Society and its members to undergo passenger hauling and having fun. However, there is a need to introduce a few measures mainly in demonstrating how the society is managing and recording certain checks and actions have been undertaken. Some of these items will be as follows but the formal information how they are to be implemented will be noti-

fied as they are formalised by the committee.

We have a more robust approach on how to manage, document and control maintenance of the Passenger Trolleys introducing a reference number rather than just a date.

We will be introducing a yearly inspection for electric locomotives, again not to be restrictive but just to demonstrate they have been looked over, just like what naturally happens when a steam loco is undergoing a boiler test.

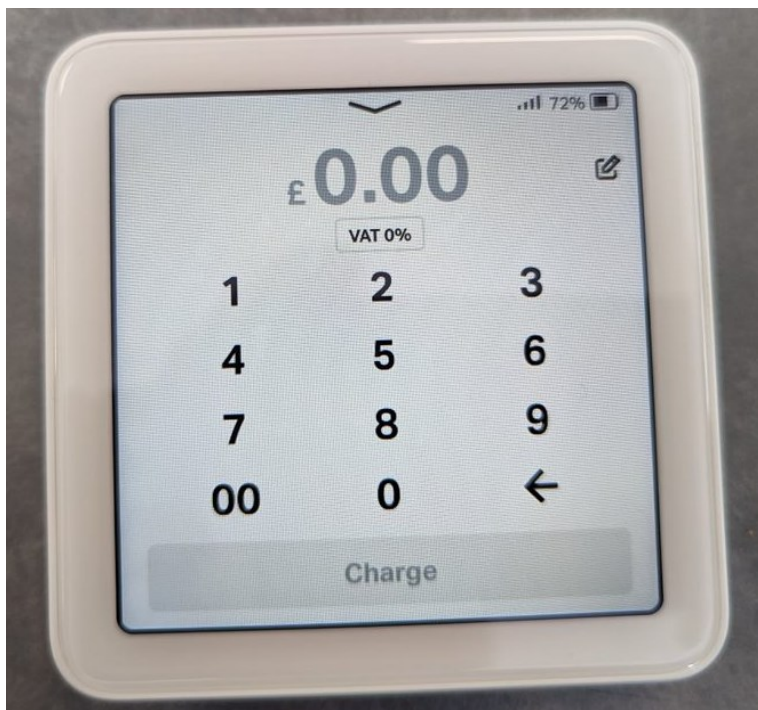
Those holding keys to the Societies building will hold additional responsibilities going forward, further correspondence will be issued to those holding keys in time.

Some slight changes to the Track Controller documentation, again further details will be issued once formalised but if you undertake the duties, please ask myself or another member of the committee if there is anything you need to be aware of.

Lastly on this matter it was felt that there was a need to have information how we dealt with the situation of a fire happening in or around the buildings at the club and so you will see Fire notices going up and details for an Assembly point and where it is located.

If you have any questions or concerns related to the HS2020 items above, then please speak with a member of the Committee but as explained details will be published as they are formalised.

I would also like let those who help with the loading and money talking that there is a new card machine in place which does not require to use the mobile phone with it, please the picture below of the machine. This does make it more straight forward and easier to use. Instructions will be made available with the card machine how to use it. Again, any issues with using the card machine or if you cannot find the instructions please speak with a member of the Committee.



Lastly, I would just like to say that I am wishing you all the best for the summer session of 2023, and I hope you have time to come and enjoy some of that with us at the club, maybe helping out with the various duties or running your locos. Undertaking the roles of Track Controller, loading or money taking can equally be an enjoyable and fun part of the clubs running season to get involved in and are not as difficult or daunting as they may sound, especially as there are members of the committee available to provide guidance and support.

I hope you have a great year and look forward to seeing you at the Club of a weekend.

Chris.





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# A Brief History of the Maidstone Model Engineering Society (New Zealand)

This history was written by founding member Phil Davis in 1994 and covers the formation of the Society and the construction of the raised track at Maidstone Park. In 1994 the Society was in the process of laying the 7.25" gauge ground level track which resulted in some changes to the raised track. We have kept the text in the present tense as written in 1994 however while taking this document from typed original we have added the photos and drawings.

Of the locomotives mentioned in the article:

K911 is in a private collection awaiting rebuilding.

Jumbo was rebuilt from 5" gauge to 7.25" gauge and is now known as the Critter.

Jill is still in service as she was built and can be seen running at times on our raised track.

We're unsure of the current locations of the County and Titch. A January 25 1967 'Leader' article said Mr P Davis had built three models, and had suggested that a track be laid in Maidstone Park. The article printed a picture of the latest model, and gave the following details; a 1:12 scale model of a New Zealand Railways K-class locomotive K911; the model is 6 feet (1.83 metres) long, 8.5 inches (216 mm) wide and 11.5 inches (292 mm) high, was driven by 1.6-inch (41 mm) pistons, and ran on 3.5-inch (89 mm) gauge rails; it could operate at up to 100 pounds per square inch (6.9 bars), and could pull two carriages of children from around 30 psi; it had taken Mr Davis 2000 hours to build the model from scratch.

## **A brief History of the Maidstone Model Engineering Society to the opening day**

### **By P.J.D. Davis (1994)**

I have been requested to write a history of our Society. At the time of our formation I was employed in the City Engineer's office, this gave me fairly easy access to the then Mayor, Town Clerk, Councillors and a number of



staff members. Special mention should be made concerning the Director of Parks, Mr Allan Morgan. He was a real tower of strength and in the early days most helpful, having more than a passing interest in the area of land we now lease from Council.

Our history begins in 1967 when I was a member of the Hutt Valley Model Engineering Society. I recall the occasion when I ran my "County" at Petone on a windy day and on returning home found all the inside valve gear covered in sand. The situation was so bad that, to effectively rid all the moving parts of sand, entailed removal of boiler. I was giving vent to my feelings when Allan Morgan called and wanted to know why the air was so blue. I told him in no uncertain terms. No comment was made, but in a week or so he came to the Drawing Office and mentioned he had something of interest to show me in Maidstone Park.

This was the area of land we now occupy and Mr Morgan thought the area would be suitable for the building of a miniature railway. I agreed with him. The land concerned had been a dumping ground for years, long before Mr Morgan was appointed as Director, and was a real dumping ground for all

types of rubbish, such as stumps, old sheds, just to mention a few. However, I could see the potential of the site. The next item was the necessary approval of Council for us to form a Society and the use of Council land.

The matter was first raised at a Library & Reserves Committee meeting held on 7th February 1967, as a result of a letter written by me on 30th January 1967. At this meeting our proposals were outlined and it was also pointed out in a letter from the Lions Club that they were interested in co-operating with the Society in the construction of the track. A plan of the track was tabled at this meeting; this was a proposal subject to final surveys. After discussion it was recommended that Council agree to the establishment of a miniature railway within the confines of Maidstone Park.

Our first meeting was held in the Council Chambers on 27th February 1967.

Present: P. Davis, L. Peace, J. Ross, F. Schneider, L. Kay, A. Cheshire, R. Thomas, L. Burney, L. Gear, D. Ross, B. Ross, S. Welham, M. Gilbert, R. Redward, D. Brown, D. Wilson and R. Kay from Lions Club.

Apologies: M. Duston, W. Russell, R. Radford and A. Morgan, Supt. Parks & Reserves.

At this meeting a name of the Society was agreed to, so the Maidstone Model Engineering Society was born. The major item was the election of officers:

President: P. Davis

Vice Presidents: R. Kay (Lions Club), L. Kay

Secretary/Treasurer: S. Welham

Committee: R. Thomas, A. Cheshire, B. Ross

Supt. of Motive Power: F. Schneider

Public Relations Officer: R. Burney

At this stage Brian Ross offered us the use of Anthony Motors showroom as a meeting venue. (This building is now occupied by Beaurepairs.)

At this stage the amount for annual subscription was decided upon:

Adults £1-00 (One Pound) (Two Dollars)

Students 10/- (Ten Shillings) (One Dollar)

At a Committee Meeting on 13th March 1967 it was reported that the

Mayor, Mr P.H. Kinsman, had agreed to be the Patron of the Society and Mr W.F. Downs, Councillor, had agreed to be Vice President. Mr L.F. Beck, Barrister & Solicitor, had agreed to act for the Society if and when necessary.

It was at this stage that the Lions Club commenced fundraising. This they did by organising raffles in hotels and suchlike. From memory, an amount of approximately £1100.00 (Eleven Hundred Pounds) was raised by this means.

Another popular fundraiser was an elephant race in Main Street. I understand that after this event the street cleaners were kept very busy.

In the meantime, Granville Walker, a staff engineer in the Engineers Office, commenced the associated survey work and drawings for the track. Before leaving the U.K. Mr Walker had been associated with alterations to Kings Cross station yard, so our project was in good hands.

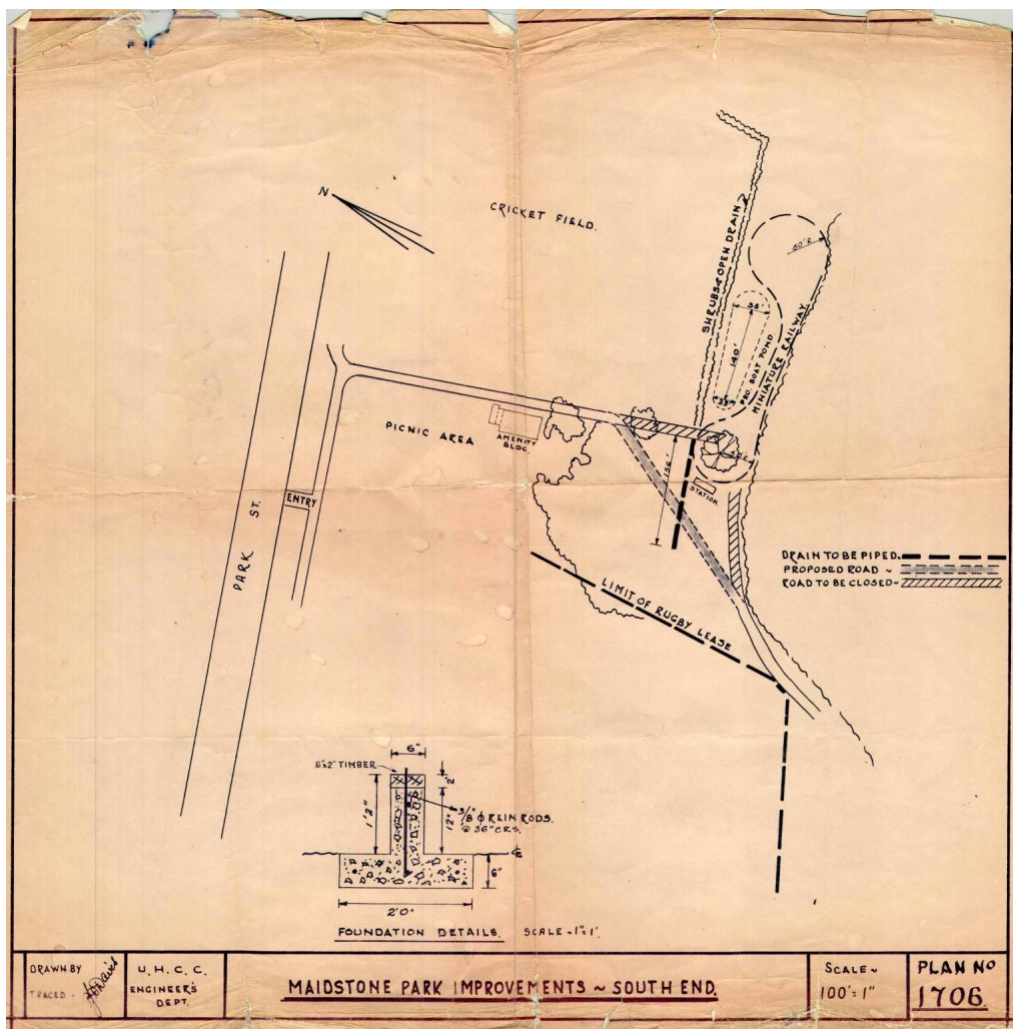
A copy of the original track plan showing the railway, station location, and a proposed boat pond.

However, about this time there was an unfortunate split in the Society. One group wanted what they referred to as an exciting railway with sharp curves and steep grades. I pointed out that safety of passengers was paramount and that we had to consider those members with the lower powered locomotives. So I am sorry to say that owing to this our numbers were reduced somewhat. At this time Sam Welham resigned as Secretary and Geoff Madge was appointed as

Secretary/Treasurer, a position he held with distinction for many years.

The early phase of our activities had now ended and the real work commenced. The Mayor, Mr P.H. Kinsman, turned the first sod on Saturday morning early in November 1967. Unknown to him we had cut it out the previous evening, this obviating any undue strain on the Mayor's back.

It was a great thrill to see the Lions, led by Mr E.E. McCarthy, tackle the construction of our railway. The heaviest work involved the top cutting and the Council's air compressor was worked to full capacity within the rock cutting. We are very fortunate that many aspects of our track construction has been captured on movie film by Maurie Dustan who had his



camera in action without us being aware of it.

The first day the Lions used two trucks to convey spoil from the top cutting to an area adjacent to the traverser. The Lions placed the piers and reinforcing rods ready for the pouring of the ready-mix concrete. Society members followed up with the timbers and rails etc. The first sod was turned in November and by Christmas we had trains running from the new station site to the beginning of the top curve. Most of the running was done by Frank Schneiders 5" g "Titch", plus to a lesser extent by K911.

Early in 1968 the Director of Parks expressed dissatisfaction with con-



struction progress. This is when Roy Wilkinson was placed in charge of the project, resulting in the driving of the “last spike” in July 1968. Roy is still one of our boiler inspectors.

During that year work proceeded on the manufacture of five passenger cars which over the years proved their worth. Thanks to the efforts of the late Harry Tinsley we were able to have built two petrol locomotives, “Jumbo” was the first, followed shortly after by “Jill”. In the dry season these engines were very valuable and they had the additional advantage of being very simple to handle.

About this time Derek Brown was able to procure for us an old railway hut for storage purposes etc, so I had it placed adjacent to our present steaming bays. As soon as Alan Morgan saw it he said two words, “shift it”. He said there was a danger of flying cricket balls, so this is the reason why it had to be placed in the vicinity of the 40’ radius curve. We always seemed to have plenty of work on hand, priming of timber (we have to thank Mrs Madge for this work), and all steel work had to be painted. We had excellent public support, some Sundays would see a queue from the station down to the amenity block, so we had no financial problems to speak of. Our fare for a circuit in those days was one shilling (or ten cents).

Thanks to the efforts of the Lions, on Saturday October 4th, 1969 the complex was opened by Peter Gordon, the Hon. Minister of Railways. He also unveiled the monument.

The monument unveiled at the 1969 opening of the railway, with the addition of the plaque unveiled in 2019 commemorating 50 years of the railway.

K911 had the honour of breaking the ribbon, driven by the Hon. Minister. This was followed by a number of locomotives driven by members from other clubs. The Minister remarked that he was not used to opening railways, usually the opposite.

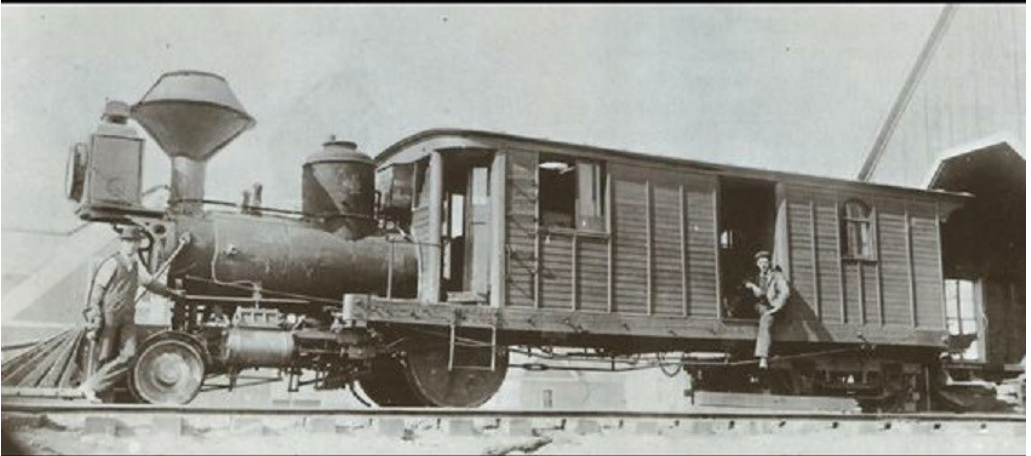
Until a year or so ago, apart from executive changes, the Society affairs remain more or less static. This is the reason that I have only covered the time of our early years, which were full of interest.



A friend of mine quit his job  
as a reporter and left town  
by the railway.

It was an ex-press train

**When you really want a new  
locomotive for your layout,**

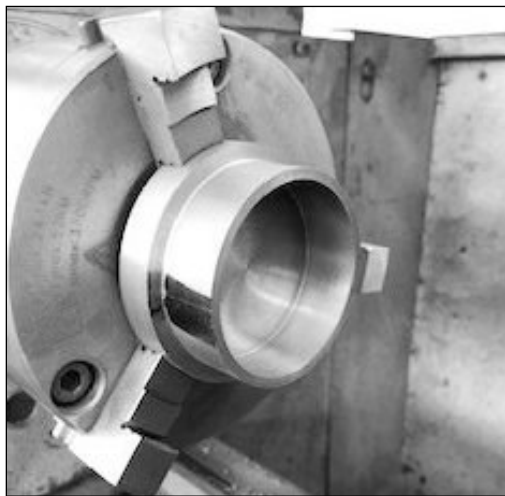


**but all you've got is the  
spare parts box to work with.**

# Making Cluppet Rings by Andy Blackwell

The loco I am currently building, a GWR Hall in 7¼" g., requires two sizes of piston/valve rings, 2.27" and 1.25" dia. There are two types of ring that I could use, plain iron rings or Cluppet rings. Those not familiar, Cluppet rings are a two stage ring joined in the centre (effectively like a spiral). Cluppet rings offer the benefit of improved sealing but they are more complex to manufacture but are my preferred option. They are available commercially and generally made to order but due to the long lead time for supply I decided to have a go at making my own. The principles of the manufacture were described on YouTube on the Steam Workshop site by John Holroyd one of the SW engineers. The principles still required a little more experimenting to refine for my purposes.

This articles sets out the sizes that I machined to after the experimentation and the process I used to manufacture, in this case the 2.27" dia piston ring. Material is cast iron grade 250, I did experiment with other grades but found 250 to give the best results.



1 – In a lathe chuck some bar stock and machine the outside diameter (OD) oversize 2.30" dia and inside diameter (ID) to finished size 2.084" dia x about 15/16" long and this will make two off rings.

2 – Mark across the OD two lines indicating the width required for the angular section connecting the two ring parts, 0.24" on the 2.27" rings. Set up on a rotary table and using a 1/32" thick slitting saw set the height



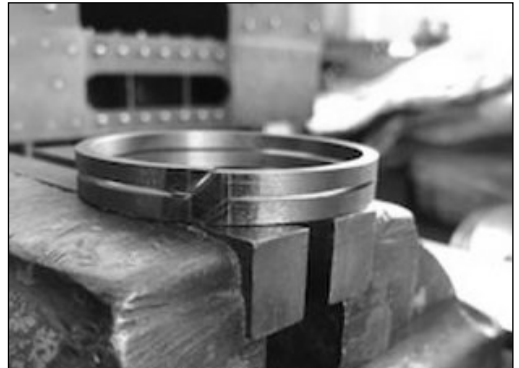


to give a 0.16" wide top ring (this gives .030" face allowance for finishing once the groove has closed during heat treatment). Machine a groove starting and finishing at the marked angular section.

3 – Drop the height of the slitting saw to slice off the ring to 0.34" wide.

4 – Using a thin file or fret saw in the groove remove the radius left by the slitting saw at the marked angular section.

5 – Mark off the angles (approx.



45°), one on each half of the ring. Using a razor or fret saw cut the two angles to separate the ring sections.

6 – Turn the ring inside out, the ring is a lot tougher than many appreciate and you can be quite brutal doing this ! Tidy the ends of the two ring angular sections and the faces where the slitting saw may have left some material.





8 – Spring the ring over the mandrel and heat the ring to cherry red ensuring the whole ring is soaked. Remove the heat and allow to cool as slowly as possible. I box the ring in with fire bricks after heating.

7 – You will now need to manufacture a mandrel. This should be machined to the inside diameter of the ring  $\times 1.022$  (for this ring  $2.084 \times 1.022 = 2.130$  dia).

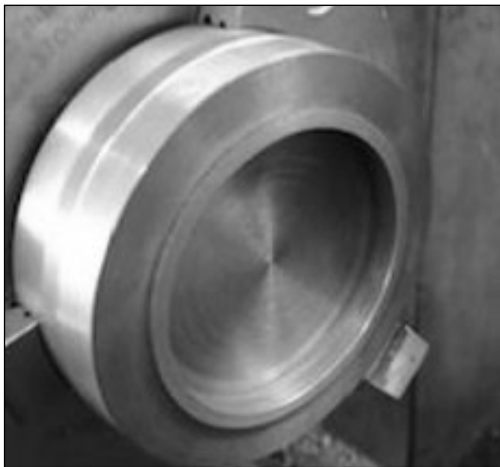


sections from the slitting saw should now have closed and the ring will have some spring in it. At this point it might also be necessary to gap the angular faces to achieve 0.003/0.004" clearance, the slitting saw faces must be touching all the way round. Final gapping may also be required when installing.

9 – Once cool the ring will now be loose on the mandrel. Remove and clean up to remove the scale then turn the ring back to its correct form. Again the ring is tougher than imagined. The gap between the two



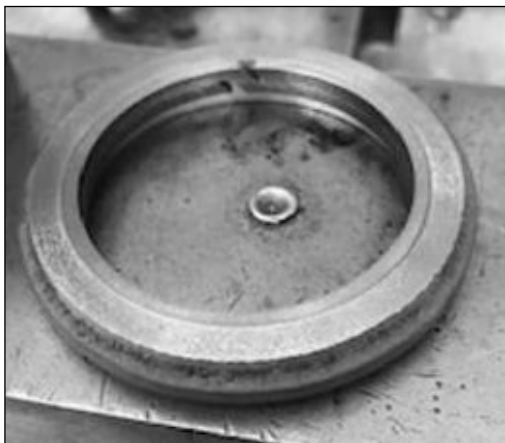
10 – (ed - Bottom of page 20) Another fixture is now required. Chuck some material and machine a bore in the face to the OD of the ring (in this case 2.30" dia) x depth equal to finished width less .010/.020" (for this ring 0.23"). Spring the ring into the bore and face the first side to clean. The spring of the ring is sufficient to hold in place during machining as long as light cuts are taken, 0.004/0.005" per cut.



11 – Reverse the ring and repeat to clean the second face.



12 – Checking the ring width and assessing how much in total now needs removing to establish finished size (0.25"). Remove material from each side as required to keep the two split ring sections as equal as possible.



13 – A closing ring and clamping mandrel now need to be manufactured. The closing ring should be bored to the current OD size of the ring (2.30" dia). The clamping mandrel requires a step machining equal to the bore of the ring (2.084") x ring width less 0.02" (0.23"), a tapped hole in the centre (M10?) and a clamping plate to ring finished dia less 0.010/0.020" (2.25"), the thick-

ness should be sufficient to clamp the ring once the closing ring is removed.



14 – Insert the piston ring into the closing ring, place over the step on the clamping mandrel and clamp the ring using the clamping plate and M10? cap screw. Remove the closing ring by wobbling off the piston ring. Machine the OD to finished size, 2.27" dia and break edges with a file. The ring is now completed.



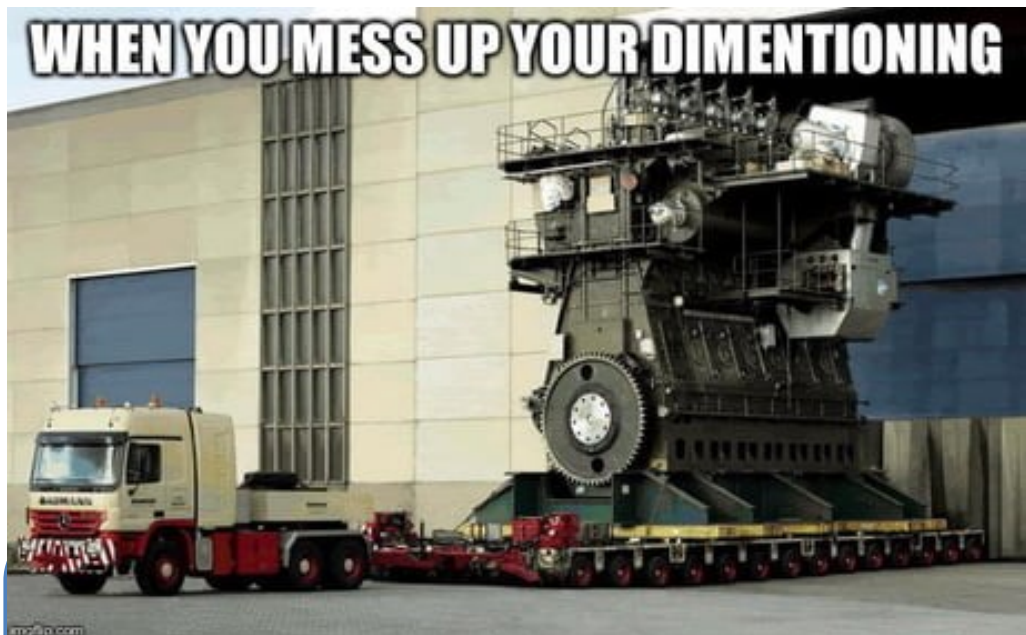
The valve rings were manufactured in the same way using the sizes below, the valve rings were slotted using a 0.5mm slitting saw.

Finished sizes :- Piston ring 2.27" OD x 2.084" ID x  $\frac{1}{4}$ " wide (giving a  $\frac{3}{32}$ " thick ring). Valve ring 1.25" OD x 1.13" ID x  $\frac{1}{8}$ " wide (giving a  $\frac{1}{16}$ " thick ring).

Ed - If anyone else has tried Cluppet rings, either self-made or bought - It would be interesting and make an interesting article as to your experiences and the pros and cons of using them over plain rings, O-rings or alternate methods

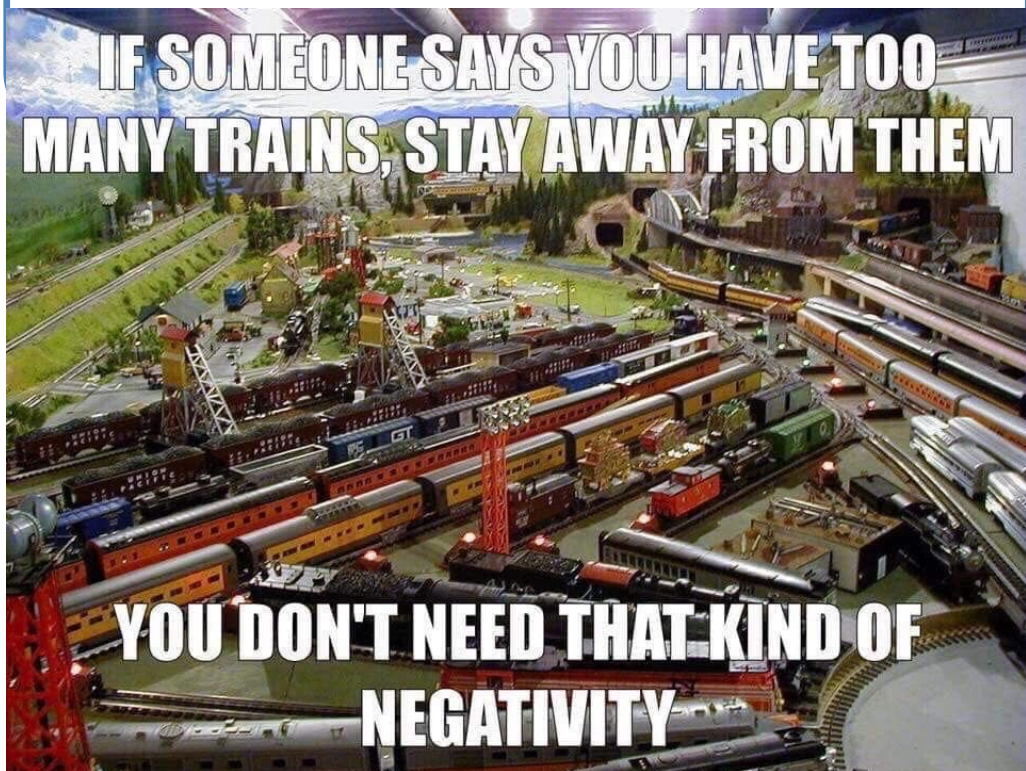


**WHEN YOU MESS UP YOUR DIMENTIONING**



These two come courtesy of Facebook

**IF SOMEONE SAYS YOU HAVE TOO  
MANY TRAINS, STAY AWAY FROM THEM**



**YOU DON'T NEED THAT KIND OF  
NEGATIVITY**

# PETER BRIAN KINGSFORD

26<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 1932 – 23<sup>RD</sup> DECEMBER 2022



Pete in 2020, with his Maid of Kent

Peter, known to some of us as “Little Pete,” was born at 1 Downside Cottages, Bekesbourne Aerodrome near Canterbury, to parents Herbert and Ethel Kingsford. He was an only child, but nevertheless he was surrounded by a large family of uncles, aunts and cousins. Life was hard; but he had a carefree early childhood. Living and playing near an airfield had an influence on Peter for his future.

The aerodrome in the 1930s was run by the Kent Flying Club and the early flying machines were the playthings of the rich. When the Second World War broke out, the R.A.F. immediately took control of the aerodrome. Canterbury was heavily bombed during

the war and Peter remembered a bomb fell in their back garden when the family were all hiding under the kitchen table. Luckily, the bomb did not explode, but the force of it landing did damage the house and a huge crack in the wall appeared. Peter recalled being able to look down the street through this crack when he was climbing the stairs (probably when he came down the stairs too). He spent many happy times as a lad searching for shrapnel on bomb



sites, with his mates.

He went to Simon Langton School for boys, but it was not a great experience for him as all the younger teachers had joined up to contribute to the war effort, and so the school had persuaded the older, very strict teachers out of retirement to return to the school and teach again. Discipline was very tough, and this meant that Peter did not enjoy his time at school under the old regime. After he left school, he obtained an apprenticeship with Ashford Railway Works and worked in the erecting shed building steam engines (another big influence in his life).

Peter loved his job. One of the engines he worked on was the Q1, which was a workhorse during the war. Peter had seen them regularly, running along the train lines around Canterbury. He was to build an exact copy of one in later life in 5" gauge, which he ran regularly at Mote Park.

As a young man he kept himself fit and was a member of Canterbury Cycle Club. In the 1950s, he received his call up for National Service. Having the interest in engineering, he decided to join the Merchant Navy as they still had steamships in service. This was despite the fact he never learnt to swim. He naturally chose to work in the engine room, and he did his statutory two years of National Service there. Then decided to stay on for another six years, working his way up the ranks to becoming an officer. Favourite seafaring stories of his included:

Sailing around Sicily and seeing Mount Etna erupt;

Being docked in Sydney Harbour when they started to build the Opera House; and

The ship docking at a port in Portugal just for him so he could have some emergency dental treatment.

Arriving back home, it took a period of adjustment to life back on land. He took up gliding and joined the Kent Gliding Club, firstly as a hobby, and later as a flying instructor. He met Pauline at the club who he married in 1966, and daughter Lucy was born in 1969. Peter and Pauline went their separate ways in the early 1970s, and Peter had custody of Lucy. This was at a time when it was unusual to be a single father. He was a super dad, although he could be quite hard when he felt it necessary. By the late 1980s, Peter had stopped flying and was the Chief Engineer, which meant he was building, repairing, and maintaining gliders and light aircraft.

Peter's love of steam engines had never waned and in August 1983 he joined Maidstone Model Engineering Society. He grew to love the Club at Mote Park and would attend almost every Sunday. He served for some years on the committee. He became the expert on the track, and this he looked after, even when he stopped being on the committee. He was one of the club's boiler tester for many years. Pete would always assist with whatever needed doing. He was a real team player, never causing any trouble, always helpful. He would take his turn at being "Duty Dog" – Traffic Controller – when we were public running. He often volunteered himself for this position on the first running day each year. He would also attend the Wednesday morning meetings whenever he could, from when these first started some years ago. In winter he would always be part of any working party, on Wednesdays and Sundays. He had gained a lot of knowledge over the years, and many members would consult with him. Peter was well liked and respected in the Club, and as said before, was always regular attendee. For his work and contribution to the club, he was given the honour a few years ago of becoming a Life Member and voted the position of Vice President.

At the end of last century, he attended the Pontins Model Engineering Week in Somerset every September with a group of us for a few years. Then the club decided to run its own annual club holidays in



Pete at Leeds Track in Yorkshire,  
on the MMES S.H.I.T. Week holiday in 2001

June for several years that I organised (the infamous Sue's Holidays Including Trains – abbreviated to a S.H.I.T week). This was when a few members would take their locos to various parts of the country, stay at a caravan site for the week, and do a group visit to nearby tracks in the area almost every day to run our locos, ending up in a pub near to the caravan site for dinner every night. Pete came to these every year they ran. He would run a loco at Open Days and weekends at other clubs, with a group of us. These included the early days of the resurgence of the rally at National Loco Rally at Birmingham, the Dreaming Spires Rally weekend at Oxford, and visits to Canvey, Beech Hurst, and Romney tracks to name just some. In summer he often ran his locomotives at Maidstone, hauling passen-

gers most public running days until his later years. But then he would still be around to help out when required, often driving the petrol-engine Club Loco that Graham Kimber had built, and Peter was the one that gave it the name Galloping Gertie. Peter himself built seven steam locos in his time: the first was the 4-4-0 Maid of Kent. Then followed 4-4-2 Jersey Lilly, his Southern Q1, River class 2-6-4, an SF Pacific and Lord Nelson. These were all in 5" gauge, but he also built a 3½" gauge Mona.



Peter and Lucy at the  
2017 MMES Grange  
Moor Lunch

Daughter Lucy was the light of his life, and he adored her. In 1997 she married Phil, and had three daughters, Emily, Madeleine and Phoebe, who Peter also doted on. Lucy had a Saturday job when the girls were small, and so Peter would babysit. The girls certainly knew how to get around their Little Grandad as they called him. Rules went out of the window and much fun was had. I remember Peter telling us of one occasion when he was babysitting and the girls would get a chair for him to stand on so he could reach the biscuit tin for them. This Lucy had hidden on top of a cupboard so the girls could not get to them while she wasn't there. The girls, however, thought otherwise and did not have much trouble in getting Peter to do their bidding. Peter and Lucy came every year to the club's annual lunch at the Grange Moor Hotel.

Lucy and the family went to Mote Park at least once every year as the girls grew, so they could all have a ride behind Peter as he drove



Pete's 80<sup>th</sup> with family at his 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration at the club in 2012

his locomotive on a Sunday afternoon for the public. He looked forward to his family Christmases with them all, and being down the Park at the club for the Boxing Day run. In 2012, Lucy asked us to have a lunch party at the clubhouse on his 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday, which was on a Sunday. Many members turned up to help celebrate.

As he got older, health problems that can come as one ages, prevented him coming to the Park as much as he would have liked. Nevertheless, he still came to the club whenever he could.

In March 2022, he reached the age of ninety, spending the day with Lucy and family. Next day was a Sunday, so he was at the Park as usual where a birthday cake was waiting for him from the members.

In December 2022 he became very unwell, and sadly died after a short illness, just before Christmas.

It goes without saying that Peter, coming to the club and doing so much for us, in his quiet unassuming way for four decades, will be sorely missed.

By Sue Parham

Pete, the day after his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday 2022, with a celebration cake at the club.





# ANDREW BARRY BRIDGES

21st January 1961 - 31 January 2023



Luke and Andy at the Bluebell, with “Bluebell”

Andy was born in Halling Kent to Peter and Marjorie. He was the youngest of six children. His three oldest brothers, Pete, John and Roger still survive but two other siblings died as babies.

He attended primary school in Halling and secondary school in Snodland. During school holidays he would often be found with his dad on board a tug boat pulling barges up and down the river Medway from Strood to Allington. His dad was the skipper and the tug belonged to the London and Rochester Trading Company which later became Crescent Shipping.

At the end of his time at school he was only allowed to take one exam as he wasn't seen as bright enough to do others even maths and English. He left school with one pass in metalwork. Despite the lack of qualifications in

1978 he started as an apprentice fitter and turner at the Lead Wool Company in Snodland where he attended college one day a week for four years. During this time his maths skills including algebra greatly improved.

One story I do remember from his time here was just before the Christmas holiday break and the men in the engineering shop went to the local pub which was in walking distance. Andy had one too many. I should mention that on the site of the factory was a Roman villa which was being excavated and so to keep him away from any bosses who might walk in his colleagues put him down one of the holes to sleep it off. He didn't get found out and one of the men took him home at the end of the day.

It was at the Lead Wool Company that Andy and I started going out together. I worked in the office in the wages department. This was 1984 and two years later we married in the United Reform Church in Snodland.

In 1986 Andy left to join Crescent Shipping in Strood still as a fitter and

Luke, Andy and Simon at a club open day







An oopsie turner in the shipyard. It wasn't unheard of for Andy to be asked to work through the night if a part was needed urgently like a new prop shaft or rudder post. I can remember taking him fish and chips on a number of occasions. He was a very skilled machinist and his work was always of a very high standard. Crescent changed its name to Crescent marine Services and also rented number 2 and number 4 dry docks in Chatham Dockyard so Andy sometimes had to work there. They also had a workshop in Otterham Quay near Rainham where he did lifeboat refits. He

also did work there and was very proud when one was completed and went back into service.

During the time he was working for Crescent and I was also by now we had our two sons, Luke in 1991 and Simon in 1994. In 1995 he started working for Denton Ship Repairs who took over from Crescent at Otterham Quay where he continued working on the lifeboats until he was made redundant in February 2000. he started another job straight away with Acorn ship repairs based in Rochester but they also took over the old Crescent site in Strood so he worked between them both. He wasn't very happy there and left in August 2001 to work for L&M Shipyard. He was much happier there but left after a couple of years because the payment of wages was unreliable and were sometimes late.

In November 2003 he began working at the Port of London Authority based at Gravesend as a marine engineering assistant. In 2006 he was promoted to marine engineering craftsman. The PLA do like sending their staff on courses and he completed quite a few during his time e.g. crane driving, fire fighting, welding, various diesel engine courses. In 2009 he was promoted to Marine Engineering Technician. He stayed at the PLA for the rest

of his working life.

Outside of work he enjoyed model trains and full size engines. It was in 2009 that he and his sons joined MMES. Luke and Andy built their first kit built engine a Polly VI called Marjorie Evelyn. Later on he would help build a Polly Trojan engine with Luke.

He was very supportive in both boys interests and when Simon wanted to build a remote controlled truck he was only too happy to help. This led to him getting one of his own and they both joined a local club together where they could drive them around a purpose built layout.

He was also an active bellringer, again with Luke and Simon at Birling Church. They would ring for weddings and remembrance Sunday, and various important dates throughout the year. His last visit was on the day Queen Elizabeth died and although he wasn't strong enough to take part he wanted to be there.

We both enjoyed walking especially if it was by the sea. This started as a means to keep fit and lose a bit of weight but soon turned into just an enjoyable pastime out in the fresh air. He also enjoyed visiting National trust properties especially if we went with my sister and brother in law. A visit to the tea shop was always the end to a day out and he would patiently wait for us while we had a look round the gift shop.

He was overjoyed when Luke and Amy got married and was soon involved in laying carpets in their house and helping Luke build a workshop before his illness stopped him doing too much physical activity.



Ed - I have no idea either.....

Once he got his diagnosis he remained positive and was determined to win his fight. He never complained and never questioned why it happened to him. He was a brave fighter right to the end. Taken far too soon and we shall miss him terribly.

By Alison Bridges



A rare photo of the family all together, in the grounds of Dunster Castle, Somerset

# MMES DIARY DATES 2023

MMES AGM	5th May
Polly Rally at Andover	13th May
The Peter Roots Friends and Family Day	10th June
Gravesend MMES Open Day	24th June
IMLEC 2013 at Bristol SMEE	7th - 9th July
Sheppey MEMS Open Day	22nd July
Polly Rally at Rugby	9th Sept
FMES Rally at Frimley and Ascot	16th Sept
Midlands Model Engineering Exhibition	12th - 15th Oct
Last Public run of 2023	29th Oct
Boxing Day run	26th Dec

Don't forget there is almost always someone at the club on Wednesday's and Sunday's even out of the running season, testing, having a play or doing maintenance work around the track and club site - or even just there for a cup of tea and a chat!

