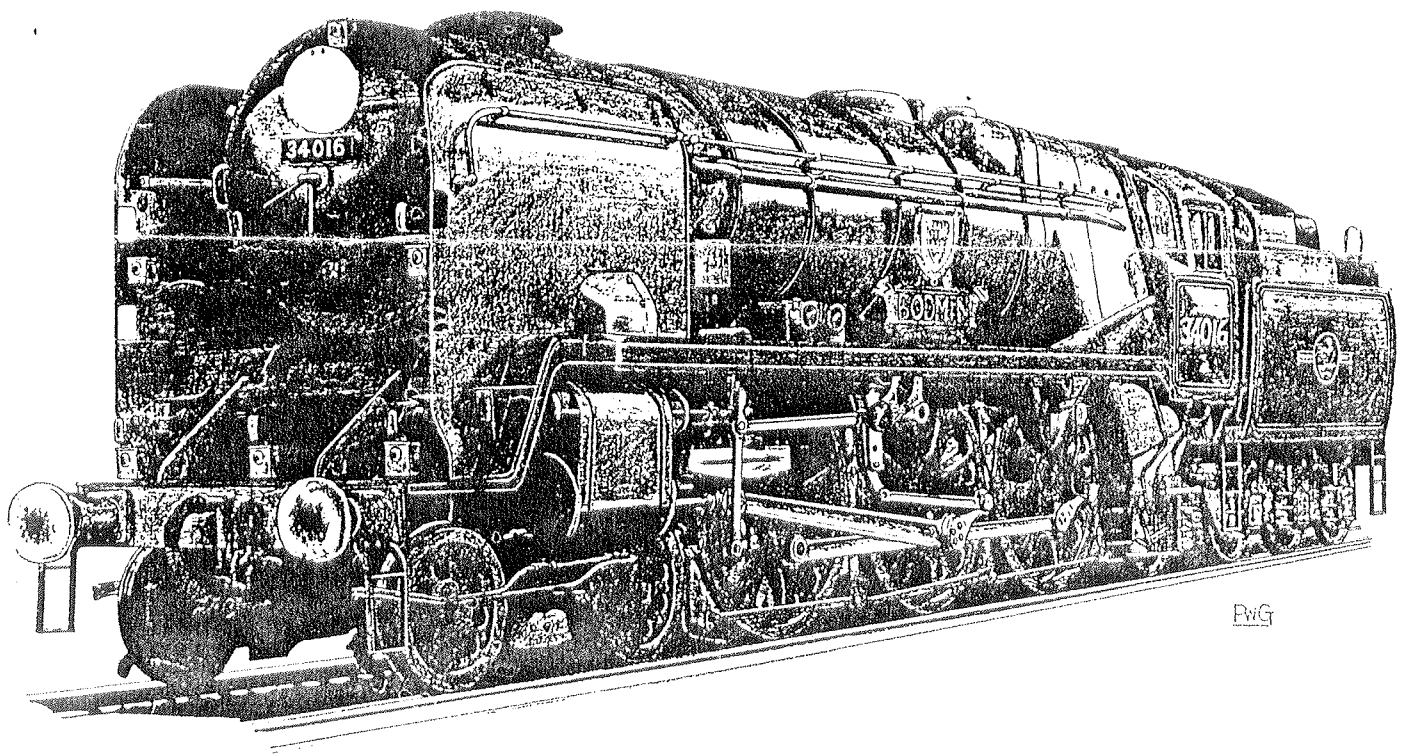


# Maidstone Model Engineering Society



NEWSLETTER

Spring/Summer

1990.

## BOILER TESTING

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.

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 Drive,Charing Heath,Ashford. Charing 2086

Mr.M.Parham. Bramleys, Old Loose Hill, Loose, Maidstone. M/stone 744175

Mr.D.Paterson. 1 Westlawn,LittleIvy Mill,Loose,Maidstone. M/stone 743081

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

THE FOLLOWING BOILER CERTIFICATES HAVE EXPIRED AS AT 05/04/1990 :-

NAME	MODEL	EXPIRED
MR P.CHISLETT	5" GAUGE 0-6-OT TERRIER "ROLVENDEN"	03/04/90
MR A.F.COPPINS	4 1/2" SCALE BURRELL TRACTION ENGINE	01/08/88
MR B.CRABTREE	5" GAUGE 0-6-OT TERRIER "PRESTON"	03/04/90
MR J.EWINS	5" GAUGE 0-6-2T No.920	16/08/88
MR J.EWINS	5" GAUGE 0-8-OT "JIMMY'S RIDDLE"	27/04/87
MR C.HAYWARD	5" GAUGE 4-6-0 "ISLE OF SHEPPEY"	03/10/89
MR R.P.HOLDSTOCK	5" GAUGE 2-4-2T "LOUISA"	03/05/88
MR G.KIMBER	5" GAUGE 0-4-0 "WREN"	20/09/88
MR M.KNOTT	5" GAUGE 2-6-2T FIREFLY	22/06/87
MR R.H.MILLIKEN	5" GAUGE 4-8-2 "DUKE OF YORK"	16/05/89
MR C.NEIL	5" GAUGE 0-4-0 "DIXIE"	03/10/89
MR D.S.PATERSON	5" GAUGE 0-6-0 TERRIER	25/08/87
MR A.PROBYN	3 1/4" SCALE AVELING & PORTER TRACTOR	28/03/87
MR A.PROBYN	5" GAUGE 0-4-0 "DIXIE"	04/10/88
MR J.WILLIAMS	5" GAUGE 0-4-OT "RUBY"	03/04/90

THE FOLLOWING BOILER CERTIFICATES WILL EXPIRE WITHIN THE NEXT 4 MONTHS :-

NAME	MODEL	EXPIRES
MR N.F.CLARK	5" GAUGE 2-8-4T "DHOLPUR"	10/07/90
MR T.FRISKEN	MINNEAPOLIS TRACTION ENGINE	24/06/90
MR F.A.LAROCHE	5" GAUGE 2-6-0 "GROOMBRIDGE"	13/07/90
MR J.LEWIS	5" GAUGE 0-4-0 SWEET PEA	30/04/90
MR A.D.LEWIS	5" GAUGE GWR 0-6-0 PANNIER TANK	18/06/90
MR R.J.LINKINS	5" GAUGE 2-6-0	25/06/90
MR K.P.LINKINS	5" GAUGE 0-4-OT "JOAN"	25/06/90
MR R.H.MILLIKEN	6" SCALE FOWLER WAGGON	13/05/90
MR D.S.PATERSON	5" GAUGE 2-2-2 IRISH WELL TANK	21/05/90

# TRAFFIC CONTROLLER ROSTER 1990

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## MAY

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6th M Wren  
7th R Chessman  
13th R Vane  
20th R Crane  
27th C Darley  
28th G Evans

## JUNE

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3rd F Deeprose  
10th C Williams  
17th N Dodd  
24th T Gregson

## JULY

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1st R Hills  
8th R Hodgkins  
15th L Hulbert  
22nd P Jackson  
29th N King

## AUGUST

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5th J Larke  
12th D Herbert  
19th S Ludford  
26th R Marshall  
27th P Martin

## SEPTEMBER

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2nd C Neill  
9th D Osbaldstone  
16th S Parkes  
23rd A Probyn  
30th R Pursey

## OCTOBER

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7th A Tate  
14th P Clark  
21st D Randall  
28th R Staggs

Please all do your duty as requested. If for any reason you cannot attend on your day then please contact Chris Williams and let him know.

## BOILER CERTIFICATES :

You are reminded that no engines may run without an up to date boiler certificate, and whilst the traffic controller should check where there is any doubt this in no way removes any responsibility from the owner of the engine. Expired and due boiler certificates are listed opposite and an up dated list will be maintained on the Club Noticeboard. Please contact the Secretary if any of the details are incorrect.

Thank you chaps.

+++++  
HAVE YOU PAID YOUR SUBSCRIPTION YET? If not it is now overdue and this is your final reminder.  
Unless the Treasurer receives your monies within the next month this will be the last communication you will receive from the Society.  
Chasing subs is time consuming and costly. Please tear off the slip below and send to Peter Roots as soon as possible.

I enclose herewith the sum of £..... (£5 per person or £2-50 for retired members) which is my subscription to Maidstone Model Engineering Society for 1990.

.....  
name

address.....

.....  
date

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT ON 1989

As you read this you will notice my absence from the 'line up', as I am at the moment 3000 miles away in Chicago. I express my thanks to Graham Kimber for standing in for me (that will teach him to think he's getting a break from chairing meetings!!!). And so to 1989 :-

Undoubtedly the highlight of 1989 was the Clubs Open Day & 60th anniversary celebrations. Once again Maidstone M.E.S. proved that we rank amongst the best clubs in providing an excellent days entertainment for our visitors. The hiring of a marquee was an asset in that it gave us both shelter from the scorching hot day and also an arena to display all of our members vast variety of work. Judging by the amount of models outside of the marquee, we should have hired a larger one! It was a superb day and I heartily thank everyone who put so much work into the preparation prior to and on the day itself.

The summer we had in 1989 was the best we have had for several years with very few breaks in passenger hauling days. Once again I must thank the faithful band of supporters who turn up regularly to help with all the aspects of passenger hauling and I would appeal to all members to try and attend on the occasional running day and help spread the load. Even if you can only manage "teapot duties" it would be a great contribution.

The social aspect is just one of the joys of belonging to a society. The secretary does a great deal of work in organising visits to other clubs and these dates are then published in our stupendous (grovel grovel) newsletter. Even if you do not currently have a locomotive, it need not lessen any enjoyment in meeting new enthusiasts and seeing how other clubs operate. I can assure you that once you have made the first 'trip out' you will want to go further afield. After all, Birmingham is only 4 hours up the M1! (bring a tent!!). The serious message is :- Please try to attend club visits, as if other clubs see a poor turnout we may never be invited again.

HOLD THE FRONT PAGE There is a message just coming in..... The club locomotive is alive and kicking (well rolling). Yes your eyes do not deceive you, the club loco is at the running chassis stage. Hopefully when we get the chassis back at the Park we can start building the drive gearing and fit the engine etc. We do need to finish this project as it will be a great asset on the days when the track is a bit too slippery for the other lightfooted locos. If you feel you can contribute to this project then please come along.

Looking onward to 1990 the club is in good health as we are still adding to our fine membership list. There are a good few Simplex's and Speedy's well into construction and I look forward to perhaps seeing one or two completed this year.

Thanks must also be extended to the brave band of winter workers who have turned out in all weathers to continue making concrete pillars around the track and more recently digging out at the rear of the coal shed and workshop to allow the spring water to run clear of the buildings. We need to provide adequate drainage when the weather improves to prevent it happening again

As always the work on the club premises is never ending but then again so is all the enjoyment.....

Adrian Gurr 19/2/90

## SOLO

By Lionel Alexander

There are enormous advantages in living in the highlands. This is not a travelogue, and I don't propose to write about the beauties of the countryside. From the model engineering point of view, there are frequent and delightful challenges, since the signals from the village tom-toms soon make it known that you have a machine shop. Last week, for instance, I was called by a friend who has a saw-mill. Its chief diet is fencing-posts ("stobs" locally). These tend to be sold in hundreds, so smooth production flow is essential. The mill is driven by a Lister diesel engine of some age. It seemed that a bolt had broken, and it would take weeks to get a new one. The offending component turned out to be a nasty piece of industrial design, intended to do two jobs. The top half gripped a conventional banjo union, carrying oil to the valve gear. The bottom half retained a camshaft bearing, wherein lay the trouble. The bolt had worked loose (someone had forgotten to do up the tab-washer), and with everything flopping about the bottom end had broken off due to wallops and shakes from a pretty vibratory piece of machinery. It looked fairly straightforward turning to me, except that the only hex. of the right size I had was bronze, which I used in preference to finding an old agricultural steel bolt and giving myself problems in chucking it. That left me with a thread I had never heard of -  $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 18TPI, according to my thread gauge, which is Whitworth form. Anyway, the mill was back in service the same day (I screw-cut the thread, of course) - and I am now very well supplied with firewood.

Living where I do also has disadvantages, the worst of which is the lack of ability to scrounge. Those who used to find me on their doorstep at post-commuter hours in search of obscure tools, raw materials or advice will have bitter-sweet memories. Speaking of obscure threads, I ran up against a problem some months ago which illustrates the point. My current loco has a conventional screw reverser. Like most such mechanisms, this calls for a left-hand thread so that rotating the wheel clockwise gives forward gear. In my case, it was  $\frac{1}{4}$ " Whit. I didn't think I had a left-hand tap and die, but I rummaged and found a very rusty die marked " $\frac{1}{4}$  26TPI Whitworth L". If you look up your tables, you will find that this is *not*  $\frac{1}{4}$ " Whit. I have since come to believe that it is  $\frac{1}{4}$ " brass. "Whit" means "Whitworth form". Now, in my Maidstone days I would have left it there; called on (say) Graham; and borrowed a tap and die, probably HSS for good measure. As it was, I consulted our excellent local suppliers, who quoted me £16. This seemed a most un-model-engineering solution (to spend a lot of money on tools I might never use again), so I had to choose between three alternatives: (i) to use right-hand threads (immediately discarded as the coward's way out); (ii) to screw-cut; or (iii) to make a tap. To screw-cut inside a  $7/32$ " hole didn't appeal at all, so I took a bit of silver steel and got going. Cutting a thread with my die was easy, and final heat-treating was straightforward. Not fully understanding how taps work, I copied the flutes in a commercial tap as best I could. In the end, while no tap-manufacturer would have given it house-room, it did succeed in chewing its way through  $\frac{3}{8}$ " of mild steel (the reverser nut). Everything now runs sweetly.

The moral of all this is that going solo concentrates the mind on initiative and the ingenious use of what is available. On the other hand, one is deprived of the stimulus of continual exchange of ideas such as exists in a club atmosphere; and, if one doesn't watch out, the hobby can become very expensive. Even the use of mail-order for

small items like rivets can run away with significant wastage in postage and packing. Lastly, there is the little matter of the nearest track - 100 miles away in my case. Before I leave the topic, I badly need a visit from a club boiler inspector. I can promise plenty of entertainment, and our food is reasonably well spoken of.

I have been thinking latterly about instructions. When I acquired my faithful Amstrad (on which I have written this) I discovered how appalling instructions can be. When it comes to locos, I have always used published designs, preferably accompanied by descriptive articles. I was brought up to believe that LBSC was perfection in this respect, and of course the current designers all use the LBSC approach, if not his captivating and eccentric style. Now I am not so sure, since I have learned a thing or two the hard way. It seems to me that the test of good instructions is that they can be understood and successfully followed by a beginner. An expert, after all, doesn't need them. Yet time after time the authors fall between the two stools of ostensible simplicity and bad practice (which I think is what Jim is always complaining about). Two examples from my recent experience spring to mind. In a Belpaire boiler, there is a large round hole in the throatplate to take the barrel. The invariable instruction is to drill circumferential holes in the plate, break out the piece so loosened, and file to fit. It may be a useful exercise for an apprentice to file out a 4" circle in copper so as to fit a barrel with a clearance such as to accept C5 or similar, but to me it is daft. What I did was to set the plate up on the lathe faceplate against a wooden backing (you could do it with Araldite, but I had just room for dogs), and then rough out with a parting tool, finishing by boring. You can't then fail to get a round hole, and with even reasonable workmanship it will be a perfect fit. I should perhaps add that this is OK in 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " gauge on a Myford 7 series (you have to use the gap). It would not work in 5" gauge. You would have to have a bigger lathe (what about the club lathe ?); or bore on the saddle; or use a mill if you have one. But anything is better than trying to mangle copper with drilled holes and a cold-chisel, followed by filing to what you hope is still a circular marked circle in your much-abused blank.

My second example is brass tender bodies. They are always put together with brass angle, and there is nothing wrong with that technique. The authors, however, invariably propose a building process, with each stage following on the final assembly of the last. Indeed, LBSC gives you no choice, since he favours rivets in both components to be joined (sole-plate and sides, for example). "What's done cannot be undone", as Macbeth said in another context. Worse, the job gets grubbier and grubbier as construction proceeds, and happy is the man whose solder tins all the joints when (as instructed) he does this at the end. He is still happier if he has not distorted the brass sheet with the heat. On top of it all, reaching some of the last rivets involves contortions of which Houdini would have been proud. Other authors favour a mixture of rivets in one component and brass screws in the other, which is much better.

Anyway, for the benefit of any beginners in MMES (and I hope they have as much fun as I have had from membership of the club) I offer Alexander's system, at the heart of which is the highly respectable engineering process of *the trial assembly*. You start in the accepted way, using rivets in one component and screws in the other. Wherever you have a choice, you aim to do your riveting in the component which will be hard to get at after assembly. You will find

that drilling and tapping for screws from the outside is usually easy. If your tank has internal sub-assemblies, make them separately. Before attaching angle to any part, tin it (the angle, not the unstabilised sheet), and clean the sheet with fresh emery or sandpaper (which does not contain oil). You can then proceed as normal, except that you assemble with just sufficient screws to ensure that everything is true and flat (or the right shape if it is not meant to be flat). Finally, take it all to bits again; put the pieces in your pickle bath for a few minutes; wash off; scrub with steel wool; assemble; and very gently and carefully warm up the tank (liberally anointed with Baker's fluid or other flux) until you can run ordinary solder round all the joints. I personally use a heat-gun adapted for soldering, but a blow-lamp is more usual. The process is made incomparably easier by *leaving off the tank top or tops*. It or they will of course have been trial-assembled, so you know that it or they fit. You are now left with a tank top to screw on and seal (after having satisfied yourself that the tank is otherwise water-tight. If not, you can see where the trouble is and rectify it). In my view, this is the place for Araldite. There was a useful article recently in ME about using it. The author suggested warming it enough to flow during assembly. If the whole tank is to be sealed this way, I agree. But for a top, I am inclined to retain the maximum "shuffling time" by leaving the adhesive at room temperature and using plenty. You will squeeze out most of it as you screw down. Where there are small gaps, it is very good at filling them. Outside it can be removed with the least unpleasantness at the half-cured stage, with the help of a pen-knife. Inside, it will probably not drip if curing is not accelerated by heat. Anyway, no one can see it, any more than you could have seen inside to check the progress of your soldering if you had believed the sacred tablets instead of me.

That brings me to my last thought, which is that we all ought to do more to help and encourage beginners. The club is already incomparable in doing this face to face, as I can testify from years ago when I knew even less than I know now. But I hope that more will appear in writing. Even if what I have said is wholly or partly nonsense, perhaps my (to date) solo effort will encourage sequels.

*L 21/1/90.*

PLEASEEE  
can I have some more articles for the newsletter. At this rate I shall be forced to  
fill the pages with tales of our recent holiday including a picture of your Chairman  
wearing nothing but his sunburn. To avoid this please send articles immediately or  
not later than August 5th to me. Thank you. SUE.



#####SUE'S SPOT.#####

# FORTHCOMING EVENTS 1990

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Friday May 4th	Talk on Ashford Works by Clive Young
Friday June 1st	Evening Run & Fish 'N' Chip Night
Sunday June 3rd	Maidstone Marathon - Charity Run
Saturday June 16th	M.M.E.S. Visit to Sutton M.E.S.
Saturday June 23rd	M.M.E.S. Visit to Bredgar Railway
Saturday June 30th	Leeds Castle Open Air Classical Concert
Friday July 6th	Preparation Night
Saturday July 7th	M.M.E.S. Open Day
Friday August 3rd	Evening Run & Barbecue
Friday September 7th	Evening Run
Saturday September 22nd	Romney Marsh M.E.S. Visit M.M.E.S.

Further information on these events is available from the Secretary and updates will be regularly posted on the Club noticeboard. All Friday evening meetings start at 7.30 p.m.

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## PAST

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How nice it is when the cool dark days of winter are over. We missed the first running day of the new season; for those who do not know we were on holiday in the U.S.A. and the Bahamas but that is another story. Works around the compound have continued and I must say a special thanks to the Beam Boys; Dylan, Malcolm and Paul in particular have worked hard in making the fresh track supports. Thanks also to Robin for his work on the committee; he has stood down this year due to other commitments and has been replaced by Bob Hodgkins ( who is compiling The Bob Hodgkins Slide Show for a winter club night for us ).

## PRESENT

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The cover picture this issue was provided by Peter Graves ( who? I hear you ask ). Peter was my tutor on a recent course, now an Administration Manager in the City who does excellent sketches of locomotives ( another reason why you should all be banking with Nat West! ) We have now started public running and your support will be appreciated. Our fortieth anniversary of public running passed very quietly, mainly due to the weather. We were planning to have a charity run on that day in aid of Cancer Research but instead we will hold it on a good day in the summer when there is the weather and the people around. We will be updating the boiler tests due each issue; it is a couple of weeks out of date now, for which I apologise as it has taken me longer than anticipated to put this newsletter together.

## FUTURE

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I hope you will be writing in your diaries or on your calendars all the Club dates coming up to make sure you will not miss anything. I'll just go through some of the dates; the Maidstone Marathon this year is in aid of the Maidstone Hospice Appeal and we will run for them on this day as well. Then we are next off to Sutton, it is a nice little track. To reiterate our Chairmans words - do come along to other clubs even if you do not have an engine to run, its still fun!

