

**Reading Society
of Model
Engineers
Charity Number
1163244**

The Prospectus

May 2024



**President
John Billard**

**Secretary
Stuart Kidd**
07966 278968

**Editor
John Billard**
john@jegbillard
.plus.com
01189 340381
07834 998971

**Free to members
227**



L S W R S15 class 4-6-0 No 506 makes a noisy entrance into Ropley station on 26 April 2024. Photo J Billard

**TRUSTEE NEWS
LES IS REUNITED
A BIG WASHER?
PROSPECTUS AND THE FUTURE
PHOTO NEWS
DIARY**

The cold Spring has continued but that hasn't stopped activities at the club. The major work modernising the workshop at the clubhouse continues apace and we have some more successful public and club running days. The 00 group has also been active indoors.

Our programme of Thursday talks have continued with the next scheduled on 9 May to hear about the Cholsey and Wallingford Railway. Last week we had a fascinating account of the failure of two very different Scottish 4-6-0s that included an intriguing story of how some original documents unknown to previous researchers came into the hands of RSME friend Peter Venn. It also confirmed that railway management boards were capable even then of decisions fully meeting today's modern standards! (i.e. crass). You heard it first at RSME! Our talks will run through to June and then have a break until September.

A major development for the club is the signing of a ten year lease from the Reading Borough Council for the occupation of our site. Significantly it gives RSME security of tenure for the future with a legal right of renewal.

The monthly matters arising from the last trustees meeting included the choice of defibrillator and an update of the key register. The track drivers record is still being worked on. On finance, the trustees were advised that with electricity tariffs changes we should be seeing a 40% reduction in costs over the coming year. Discussions continue with Barclays Bank about amending the charity status on our accounts. This has been problematic with the poor service from the bank not helped by branch closures.

With the new membership year renewals have been flowing in and new applications have been received by the membership secretary including families.

A new ceiling has been installed in the workshop and has been painted. With this and boarding of the walls it has been heavy work for those involved. It was noted that during the April public running all trains ran with two carriages and the queue was considerably improved. This is the first time that Andy Midwinter was track marshal and thanks to him were given for a successful day. The track marshal for May was to be Stephen Millward.

Private parties for the season are now commencing. Applications for later in the year are continuing, with just one available slot remaining for July.

The club risk assessment is being brought up to date in accordance with health and safety guidelines. This will be made available to schools on completion.

Regarding Prospectus it was noted that a continuing slow trickle of contributions from members meant that it was increasingly difficult to produce the

monthly edition. A notice would again be included in the next issue which it is hoped will produce an improvement.

The Stoke Row rally in June will be supported by RSME despite the earlier slow take up of members to work on the stand. It will be important to show the club in the best possible light and a rota of members will be produced so to take part. Members exhibiting independently will have to take care of their insurance for the weekend and information is available from Stuart Kidd. Those working on the stand will be covered automatically.

As reported above the lease document with Reading Council has now been signed and witnessed and is with the solicitor for transmission to the Council. A discussion took place regarding the offer of one of our members to become a co-opted trustee. This was accepted by a majority vote and the member concerned informed and a way forward decided.

The 2024 AGM have now been set for the 24 October. It was decided that an agenda item will include the future of the raised track extension. It was discussed that possibly times have moved on since this proposal emerged and that this may not now be the best use of club resources. It was however decided that this would be a matter for members on 24 October. A short discussion on the future needs of the club included raised track upgrading and ground level track repairs. It was decided to consider an upgraded Santa tick-

Past RSME President Les Dawson is delighted to be reunited with his LBSCR 0-6-2T *Ardingly*. While most of his collection has been scattered two members have succeeded in rescuing this engine that must be familiar to our longer serving members. Photo K Trussler



A PART FOR AN OLD CAR

by John Billard

We model engineers are sometimes approached by old car owners to see if we could help them by making a part that is usually otherwise unobtainable. This happened to me recently but it is not often that the vehicle is over 125 years old—a 1898 Daimler.

The engine has two cylinders with the crank running in bronze bearings and the lubrication is by dip. Therefore maintaining an oil level in the sump is critical. What was required was a suitable spacer to go between the sump plate and block consisting of an aluminium “washer” some 1/2 inch thick by nine inches diameter.

A start was made by a visit to Berkshire Metals for the material, a rectangular section. The scale of this operation was beyond the capacity of my machines so Nigel Penford very kindly offered the use of his shop.



Left, The aluminium being roughed out on the Bridgeport

Left below, Removing the centre.

Right top Turning to size

Right middle The happy machinist

Below Drilled and ready for delivery



*Photos above Nigel Penford
Left, John Billard*

STOKE ROW RALLY 2024

Update

This is just a few weeks away now. We now have a list of volunteers to work the club stand on the club notice board including a rota. Members are invited to include their names on this—the more we have the easier it will be for us all. Complementary passes will be given to those who are not exhibitors. The stand is being designed.

I have ordered club tee shirts for those behind the stand—hopefully these will be with us in time. As before, the stand will be slightly be smaller than before, but include some working machines. The club Polly is being prepared to show what our younger members can do.

This is our showpiece for people who we do not see at Prospect Park so lets show them what we can do.

THE FUTURE OF PROSPECTUS? by the Editor

I have edited the monthly Prospectus for over seventeen years now and this is my 227th edition. However more recently putting together each issue has been a struggle because of the lack of input from members and this is one reason why the present May publication is running late.

While I enjoy my editorship every hour spent on it is an hour taken away from my Super Claud build, itself running well into its third decade. While I am willing to incorporate news of my own projects it is not really the job of the editor to fill blank spaces.

Over the years the feedback from members has been minimal but at least they weren't complaining, at least directly to me! More recently I spent much time researching an 1950s miniature railway in Prospect Park. The only comment?—a spelling mistake on page 2!

Previous requests for contributions haven't been very successful but I would like to thank those who have produced some recent material including photographs. But in these days of Facebook and instant media is there a space for Prospectus? I hope so.

I'm asking that members can still relate their experiences and opinions in these pages. A regular column would be almost too much to ask for. But please respond. Everyone has a tale to tell.

Lets see if this has an impact. If not, the next chapter may be a short one!

This space deliberately left blank.

WORKSHOP REFURBISHMENT

Continuing Progress

Photos John Billard



Below, the new lathe splashback



Left top Mike Manners concentrates on the electrical socket outlets in a new wall board

Right above Mike Manners, *left*, Andy Day, *middle* and Nigel Penford *right*, confer. In the background Peter Culham works on the insulation.

Club Announcements

RSME welcomes the following new members, Brian Torr, S Smith and Nick Zealey. We hope that they will enjoy their time with the Society.

Club talks. This month on the 9th we have Dr Tony Stead on the first of two episodes on the Cholsey and Wallingford Railway. In June, on the 20th, Caroline Piller speaks on the last horse dealers of Reading. We break then till September after which our talks programme will continue. Please watch for further announcements.

We are always on the lookout for speakers. Let the editor know—any ideas will be considered, preferably with a contact address.



PHOTO NEWS

Taken by the Editor

Left Track Marshal Stephen Millward has plenty of choice of engines at the May public running 5 May 2024.

Right Cunard ship *Queen Anne* at Southampton shortly on embarking on her maiden voyage on 4 May 2024. Opinions on the aesthetics of modern passenger ship design may vary.



Left At the point of departure *Queen Anne* was given a firework send-off as seen from the fore-castle of *SS Shieldhall*. (That ship may have been built as a sludge carrier but is considerably more beautiful in the eye of the editor!)

Right London Transport. “Wren” class locomotive *Thomas Wicksteed*, typical of a waterworks engine and the last engine built by Hunslet, at the London Museum of Water and Steam in April 2024, together with a London bus passing by—details please by our bus enthusiast members!



DIARY

MAY 2024

Sunday	5th	Public running	Setting up from 09.30 onwards
Thursday	9th	The Cholsey and Wallingford Railway Talk by Tony Stead	20.00
Saturday	11th	Club running	10.30 onwards
Monday	13th	Trustees meeting	19.30
Thursday	23rd	On the Bench Night	19.30
Saturday	25th	Club running	10.30 onwards

JUNE 2024

Sunday	2nd	Public running	Setting up from 0930 onwards
Saturday	8th	Club Running	10.30 onwards
Saturday	8th	Stoke Row Rally	09.00 onwards
Sunday	9th	Stoke Row Rally	09.00 onwards
Monday	10th	Trustees meeting	19.30
Thursday	13th	On the Bench Night	19.30
Thursday	20th	The Last Horse Dealers Of Reading Talk by Caroline Pillar	20.00
Saturday	22nd	Club running	10.30 onwards

Opinions expressed in PROSPECTUS are the personal views of the contributor and cannot be taken as reflecting the views of the trustees or editor.

The deadline for the June issue is 20 May

Contributions may be submitted in hard or soft copy to the editor.

John Billard Old Station House Twyford Reading RG10 9NA

01189 340381 or 07834 998971

john@jegbillard.plus.com

Apologies for the delay of this edition of Prospectus. However by the due press date of 20 March no contributions had been received.

Please help and contribute to Prospectus.