

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

# The Prospectus

**February 2022**



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**Free to members**



To accompany the article from page 3 by John Spokes this is a rare Fowler class AA3 ploughing engine being used in 1953 to pull out pipes and beams from the rubble of the Mobius department store in Dresden. This photograph was taken by Mr Mobius himself no doubt wanting to record every step of the demolition of his bomb damaged store. *Photo University of Dresden Library and courtesy of the Steam Plough Club.*

**FROM THE CHAIR  
RECONSTRUCTION STEAM AND A SKODA  
A WHIMSEY  
NORFOLK  
CLAPHAM IN 1962  
SOLDERING STAYS**

## A VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

John Billard

The trustees met on 11th of January with a full agenda. We were very sorry to hear from Peter Harrison that he wished to stand down as a trustee pending his expected departure from the area. On behalf of all members we thanked Peter and Carol for all their hard work with RSME and they will be greatly missed.

Despite the ups and downs of the year it was pleasing to note that there was a small trading surplus for the month and year. Various projects ongoing were discussed in particular the degree of work required on the raised track. It was decided to proceed with a detailed examination with a view to undertaking repair or maintenance. Generally speaking the rails do not require as much work as originally thought but sleepers requires attention.

Further plans include platform improvement work to rectify overcrowding particularly on the raised track side, an extension to the ground level carriage shed and an improved raised track loading bay. Users of the raised track are particularly invited to assist!

In the meantime I know that much has been taking place on the A4 boundary removing saplings and dead trees where necessary. This is hard work and particular thanks or due to those involved. I know that one of them is Nigel Penford having arrived for a visit to Old Station House covered in wood chips!

The trustees have decided to try some changes to running arrangements on the tracks. Public running from February will start at 11:30 which might reduce queues later in the afternoon. It has been agreed to reduce the duration of private birthday parties to two hours which may be extended by a few minutes as needs be. Peter Culham will be proposing a party panel to deal with the uncertainty of who might be attending on a voluntary basis.

Given the experience of our Santa specials in December for this year it is planned to hold it over two consecutive weekends and dispensing with the December public running. Also 2022 contains the Queens platinum jubilee and we are thinking about some form of celebration at the club to be considered further. If you have any ideas for us don't hesitate!

Away from running events alongside the constitution we are considering putting together a set of rules to cover day to day administration of the Society. This could include things like subscription levels, membership categories, the effect of member terminations, definition of posts, and issues of conduct. This would be a matter of consultation with members.

Effective communication with members is vital and to help with this we are now putting in place a Facebook RSME page to allow members exchange information on any matter relating to the club and themselves as members. Communication has to be a two way process for the benefit of members and their trustees. Further details are contained in this issue.

**To avoid delays for Prospectus the final press date will be closely observed in future. In exchange the date in the month is now the 20th.**

## A Reconstruction, some Steam, and a very smart Skoda by John Spokes

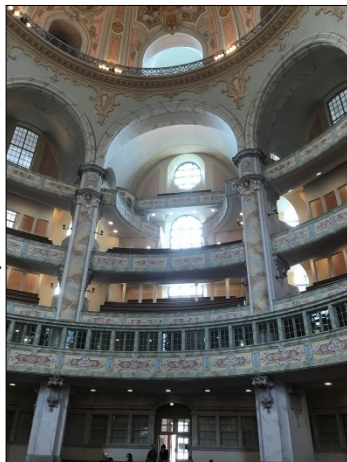
In August of last year, I drove with my wife, as we did the previous year, to Warsaw, but this time we made a detour to visit the old capital of Saxon Germany, Dresden, a place that had been on my bucket list for some time. Any reader anticipating a narrative here of Kriegsloks and Dampfests will be sorely disappointed. Germany was in the grip of strict COVID restrictions and the famous roundhouse there was securely locked – Visitors Verboten! In fact, things have got worse since – so much for German efficiency.

My story begins 77 years ago. At 10pm on the night of Friday 13<sup>th</sup> February 1945 Bomber Command's Group 8 Pathfinders arrived over Dresden's Altstadt (Oldtown) and began dropping the Target Indicators for a series of bombing raids by RAF and USAF bombers that would continue over four days and nights, killing an estimated 35,000 persons. The practice of dropping a mixture of high explosives and incendiaries was learnt from the German raids on Britain's industrial cities and in particular Coventry, three years earlier. The high explosives shattered windows and lifted roofs, allowing an easy path for the incendiaries, and in Dresden leading ultimately to a firestorm and the destruction of the baroque city centre. I don't intend to discuss the ethical and moral arguments for and against these raids, but instead to firstly to briefly describe an example of man's skill and ingenuity in rebuilding one of these beautiful historical buildings, literally from a pile of rubble, twisted iron and charred timbers.

This gem of reconstruction is the Frauenkirche (The Church of our Lady), which was originally built in the period 1726 to 1743. **Photo right** shows the original church in a painting by Canaletto, who painted many of these cityscapes, throughout Europe. The name for this type of work is a Veduta. Vedutas of Warsaw by Canaletto were also used in the reconstruction of the Polish capital, which was razed in 1944 at Hitler's instructions in retribution for the Warsaw Uprising. Although the Frauenkirche is a Protestant church, it was built in the baroque style, primarily to 'cock a snook' at the Lutherans (also Protestants) who, as part of the Reformation, were building in a less ornate style. The building itself has an outstanding profile and symmetry; a relatively small, square footprint, and soars, topped by a stone dome, which is 5 feet thick in places, to a height of 315 feet. The impression inside is of a square tower with tiered congregational galleries rising like precipices.



**See photo right** The highlight of the interior is the 69 stop, four manual organ completed in 2005 by French Organ maker Daniel Kern, which externally is a copy of the destroyed original organ, once played by Bach, and constructed by Gottfried Silbermann, one of the masters of baroque organ building. **Photo left.**



The church, which sits in the Market Square of the Altstadt, was not destroyed by bombing, but by the heat of the fire-storm, which developed on the night of the 13<sup>th</sup> February. This caused the wrought iron beams, which held up the 12000-ton dome, to expand and

3 days later, after they had cooled and contracted, the key twixt stone and iron was lost and the dome came crashing down, crushing all but a small fragment of the outer walls. Although the surrounding areas were eventually cleared of rubble, the ruins of the Frauenkirche were left by the communist government of the GDR. The reason given was that it was a monument to the destruction of the city, but financially the socialist state had greater priorities, and, in any case, religion was officially banned.

So, the church remained in that state for many years and my wife, who is Polish, remembers seeing this ‘memorial’ as a teenager on a visit to East Germany. However, following the re-unification of Germany in 1990, an international movement to reconstruct the church gained increasing momentum. Where possible undamaged original stones have been used and this gives the exterior a mottled appearance resulting from the mix of honey-coloured new and old black stones. The reconstruction was completed in 2005 and one of the last acts was the installation of a new iron cross atop the dome. The original, fire-distorted cross is on show in the church interior. This replica was made in London by a blacksmith who was the son of one of the aircrew involved in the bombing during the night of the 13<sup>th</sup>/ 14<sup>th</sup> February.

If there is one moral to this tale it is that even in these days of video games and mass-produced stuff from China, there are still the skills and artisans in Europe who can recreate the architectural and artistic masterpieces of the past.

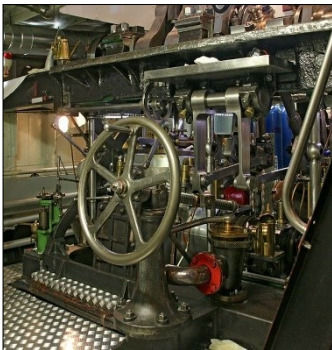
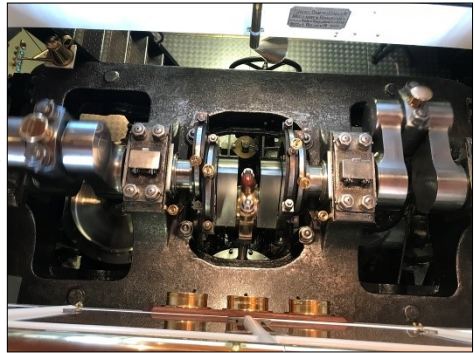
Although Damfests were verboten, I am pleased to report that I am now able to mention STEAM - twice. Firstly, our Editor has provided the cover picture

of a Fowler AA3 ploughing engine on demolition work in Dresden in 1953. This area is close to the Frauenkirche and in the left background can be seen the ruins of the Catholic Cathedral and to its right Dresden Castle, both also now restored.

My second reference to steam is that the small river port at Dresden is the home to nine paddle steamers which ply the River Elbe. These were built in the late 19<sup>th</sup>/ early 20<sup>th</sup> century, have reciprocating paddle engines and these engines, together with the paddles and the oil-fired boilers, are all very much on view to interested passengers. **Photo left** shows the paddle steamer ‘Pillnitz’ at one of the Elbe quays. It was built in 1886 and in 1911 was fitted with a 230

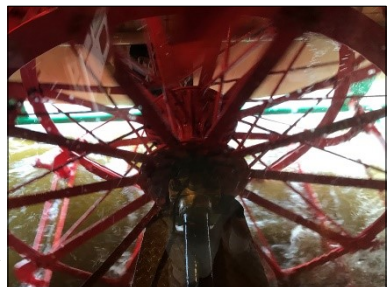


HP twin cylinder oscillating engine, working in compound mode with an inlet pressure of 150 psig. **Photo right** shows the view from the deck down onto the engine. Uppermost is the paddle crankshaft which also operates the condenser vacuum pump (centre).



**Photo left** shows the reversing wheel which was used to manoeuvre the ship, into the various boat landings, without any resetting of the steam valve. This was done to the accompaniment of the engine room telegraph bell, which resounded throughout the ship. **Photo below**, a paddle wheel, as viewed through the side of the hull.

One of the excursions for these steamers is to the town of Meissen, famed for its ceramics. Deep pockets required here. Two plain white espresso coffee cups will leave you with no change from a hundred euros. We didn't go too near the 189-piece dinner services - that 'All Breakages Must Be Paid



For' sign was disincensive enough.



The Icing on the Cake regarding the trip to Dresden was the accidental discovery (during an afternoon walk) of the scrutiny of the cars, and testing of their crews for COVID, in preparation for the next day's start of the Sachsen (Saxony) Classic Motor Rally, an annual event from Dresden to the Skoda factory at Mladá Boleslav in the Czech Republic and back, about 120 miles each way. The number and variety of cars are too numerous to describe here and included relatively modern East European cars,

e.g., Fiat 125s and old style Skodas, large American gas guzzlers, vintage Bentley tourers, quite a few Karmann Ghias, these in superb condition. For me, the outstanding item was the Skoda 1100 OHC, built in 1957 to compete at Le Mans, and now normally resident at the Skoda Museum. It is not so long ago that the Skoda badge implied poor quality and styling and the subject of many jokes. But this car caught the eye immediately and to prove my point I include two photos, taken from front and rear.



Perhaps next time I visit Dresden, the Steam Depot will be open. Videos on YouTube suggest there is much to excite the steam fan, even if all the engines are painted black with red wheels!

## LITTLE BIT OF WHIMSEY

from Alec Bray

At a recent Thursday night meeting, Mike Sinclair brought in a spare calendar: apparently he had been gifted too many calendars rather than too many bottles of Scotch. Perhaps it was just a sign of the times, with people trying to be kind: mark up when each Covid period of isolation is up!

The Calendar, "England by Rail", is a collection of railway posters, one per month: I accepted the calendar from Mike as it would be useful for the Art Group that I belong to – lots of ideas for subjects, and poster design could be a topic all on its own. So, thanks to Mike (and RSME) from the Pang Valley Art Group!

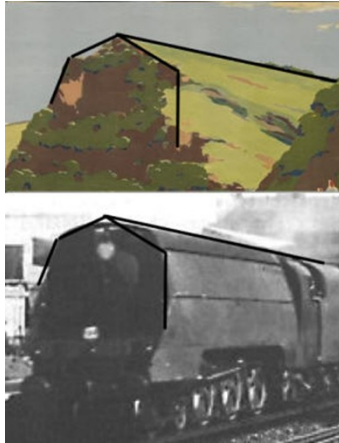
June's poster is a Southern Railway poster: "Twixt Axe and Exe", dating

from the 1930s (the artist was Herbert Alker Tripp): I think that the location is the Sidmouth coast, which is sort of halfway between the Axe and the Exe in South Devon (I am open to correction!):



I was immediately struck by the shape of the cliff in the middle of the poster - it looked very similar to the original shape of the air smoothing casing for Bullied's "Merchant Navy" Class locomotives. Now, there are not all that many photos of the "Merchant Navies" in their very first air-smoothing condition— and even fewer which match the outline of those cliffs, but here is one suitable photograph of 21C8 "Orient Line" as originally built.

For comparison, this photo needs to be reversed left to right, and then compared to the poster.



I have put the same lines on both images for ease of comparison. Ok, it is not an EXACT match, but it comes pretty close – in my opinion, at least!

The "Merchant Navy" class locomotives were originally designed to cope with heavy Continental Boat Trains from Dover and Folkestone, but that traffic was not available during the war when the first of the "Merchant Navies" were built, so the locomotives were used instead on express trains on the Southwest Main Line to Southampton and to Exeter. One such train was,

of course, the “Devon Belle”: the train was hauled by a “Merchant Navy” class Bulleid Pacific locomotive between Waterloo and Exeter Central, with Light Pacific locomotives handling the train west of that point. The normal formation was for four carriages to form the Plymouth portion, and eight to form the Ilfracombe portion, although longer trains were sometimes needed. Passengers destined for the seaside towns in East Devon would have to change trains at Exeter.

I do not believe for one moment that the cliffs in the poster were used as a prototype for the “Merchant Navy” front end design – but you never know, perhaps the image from that seaside poster was there in the back of the mind of one of the drawing office employees ... or maybe it is just a lovely coincidence!

## A SEVEN MONTH WAIT FOR A NORFOLK HOLIDAY Part 2 by David and Lily Scott

We said our goodbyes to the Norwich Club after assisting Flying Fox with the 08 back into his trailer with some assorted goods wagons all in 7 ¼ and headed for our accommodation.

A day back at the holiday village soon saw us watching the little trains. I was soon floating into the seat and amazed at the small control box to such a large diesel. Flying Fox describing his source of motor and the drive chosen. We waited for the Holmside to return with some keen campers resplendent in holiday



garb and took the single line up the bank. This was the way to have a vacation. The other campers were braving a barbecue with an eye on distant clouds at the next station. The run round circle including our third tunnel was taken carefully, and we returned. Several more goes and after a leisurely lunch. Flying Fox shunted another collection of his models out from the sheds for us. Some very useful photos tak-





en for a friend at our club building the same but slightly smaller A3. A Midge came into view and more photos taken. Dick Stockins own model indeed, what a collection. Rounded off with ice creams it was hot, even under the trees.

We headed north and found a beach beyond Cromer, West Runton. Packed and a very happy car park owner. Lily loving the 3 mile walk. She swapped

to better pebbles as we went, and I found an end of some guttering of a house lost to the sea. Yes even on holiday I seem to collect metal! The traffic had calmed down later, but I soon called a Holt\* to going further north. As we settled down for the night having got something



spicy to eat with chopsticks just by the main station. Or should I say Stations at Sheringham. The car now resembling the set of Scrapheap Challenge.

Holt\* being the northerly (*westerly, Ed.*) station on the line with an interesting museum.

Black Prince was on

the first train and the North Norfolk coast slowly revealed itself. The sun assisted me with more photographs. We defected to the other train at the midway station Weybourne and enjoyed more journeys behind Standard Class 4 76084. A shame that superb days go so very fast and we were soon heading south.

I eventually found Diss, lovely takeaway with many smiles, a seat inside and a



wave of card. Honestly the number of chips could have supplied one of our lovely Fish and Chip suppers at a Club Running. 'Breakfast' joked Lily as we found an off-road camp site. We would be first in the queue at the steam Gardens in the morning. We tried to walk off the meal in the warm evening.



**60 YEARS AGO AT  
CLAPHAM JUNCTION  
10 FEBRUARY 1962**

Here I was on the platforms of Clapham Junction. I was very lucky to see such a variety of engines including the Urie King Arthur.

*Above* 30451 Sir Lamorak on an up train from Southampton. Built in 1925 it lasted just a further four months.  
*Right* Midland 3F tank 47642 on a transfer probably from Cricklewood. This one was withdrawn the following May.



*Left* Veteran 1900 built M7 30321 was still to be seen on shunting duties. It lasted till the end of the year thus just outlasting the two other engines illustrated

**Photos John Billard**

## A NEW RSME FACEBOOK GROUP

by Stephen Millward

For those who are interested, there is now an RSME Facebook group. The aim of the group is to help RSME members keep in contact with each other. It is set up as a private group and the membership will be restricted to just paid up RSME members. Any posts made in the group should only be visible to other members.

I see this Facebook group as an additional means of communication that might appeal to some members. It will not replace Prospectus or email communications. For those who have no interest in ever using Facebook, do not worry, you can continue to communicate with the club as usual.

I think it could be useful for members who are busy in their workshops, but don't often get a chance to get down to Prospect Park, to stay connected to the club. It should provide an easy way to ask for advice or ask to borrow a tool. Or perhaps just share your latest workshop triumph or calamity!

If you wish to join the group, you will need to search Facebook groups for "Reading Society of Model Engineers" and send a request to join. Some initial members of the group had difficulty finding it and also found a group called "Friends of the Reading society of model engineers", which is for the club in the USA. Alternatively, you can send a Facebook friend request to me "Stephen Millward" and I can send you an invite to join the group.

## IN SHOPS THIS MONTH—BUILDING A CLAUD

by John Billard

### The Boiler Part 6

In a minor change of sequence it was decided to solder the outside of the firebox days prior to work on the back head and front tube plate. As before they were well fluxed and solder rings made and slipped over. With background heat from the propane burner and a No 18 oxyacetylene nozzle short work was made using the lower melting point silver solder. An overnight dunk in the citric bath showed that all was well. *To be continued*



# DIARY

## February 2022

Sunday	6th	Public running	11.30 onwards
Saturday	12th	Club running	11.30 onwards
Monday	14th	Trustees meeting	19.30
Monday	21st	Special Needs	
Tuesday	22nd	Club running	11.30 onwards

## March 2012

Sunday	6th	Public running	11.30 onwards
Saturday	12th	Club running	11.30 onwards
Monday	14th	Trustees meeting	19.30
Tuesday	22nd	Club running	11.30 onwards

**These events are subject to official advice on Covid.**

**Regular club events will continue subject to public and club announcements.**

**Warriors Maintenance Day every Wednesday unless notified.  
OO Section Meet Tuesday evenings from 7pm**

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 March issue is 20 February**

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

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***Please write for Prospectus. Photos welcomed.  
Comments by RSME members on any subject appearing in  
Prospectus are welcomed by the editor.***