

Reading Society of Model
Engineers
www.prospectpark rail-
way.co.uk
Charity Number 1163244



The Prospectus

May 2017

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Free to members



Cab interior of the Great Eastern Y14 class 0-6-0
No 564 at Sheringham on 30 March 2017
Photo John Billard

RSME AGM Thursday 25th May 19.30

DAWSON'S DIARY

kept by the President

25th March was a notable one for the Young Engineers of the club with the help of our member Stuart Higgins and one other helper managed to time the Polly chassis to run on air. With a few tweaks to adjust the reach rod it ran very well after an hour or so. The chassis got freer as the time went on.

As the weather was warmer a lot of engines were seen running. It made a good day for those who bought their locos for a run.

Last Wednesday of the month saw a good turn out of members doing jobs like mowing grass, planting flowers etc. getting ready for public running.

The club's own Baldwin is having some reworking of the water pumps, the fact is that they are getting very worn. The engine has done a lot of running over the past few years.

April public running was another busy day with very good takings with a fine number of locos coping with the passenger numbers wanting a ride. We had a visiting locomotive from another club, a 7 ¼" GWR 2-6-0 painted in WW1 colours. This loco is to the design of Ian Holder. He was a member of our club for many years, he described the loco in Model Engineer a few years ago. This engine is the third one built to his design. It ran with Mike Jones Baldwin and Nigel Penford's loco.

I am sorry to have to report the passing of Ted Tegg one of our older members. Ted had been in the RSME for many years. He was a fine model engineer. He made medal winning locos, also had a fine collection of replica guns that he made. His workmanship was superb. He was in a gun club and used to shoot some of the ones that he built. His locomotives I remember a GWR 5" Prairie 2-6-2 tank, an LNER A3 in five-inch scale and a splendid L & Y Railway 2-6-0 Crab 5", one of the best I have seen of this Don Young design. Some years ago he moved to Cornwall and lived till his nineties.

With plenty of locos out in the sunshine on club running days the boiler testers were busy. Mike Burke's 3 ½" 8F 2-8-0 passed its test and was its first run at the club, Alf ran his train of goods wagons looking very smart in the sunshine. Nigel Braund's Ben was out once again, Mike Jones King was cruising round after its four-year test. This engine really looks the part when running brings back many memories of how a railway should be run! (Please take note Andy Midwinter) I will only say this once!

Some very good news. Some of our Young Engineers have been offered apprenticeships with a little help from the RSME Young Engineer scheme we have been running for some time now.

ooOOOo oooo

PONDERINGS

by 61249

“It’s not what you know it’s who you know”

Not being of a literary mind I have no idea who this is a quote from, but this month’s contribution from 61249 is different because it is true. A colleague who I worked alongside in the 1990s at Thameslink was the MD of a neighbouring TOC. We have been mates ever since, and have done each other work favours from time to time, mostly to my financial benefit, indeed it is he who first introduced me to a 12 year post retirement job in another European country.

He has also retired and is VERY well connected with the Bluebell Railway, from where he asked me for advice on a technical issue bothering his folk. I have tried to help and by way of saying thank you I was invited to join a special party in the preserved saloon (GNR General Manager’s) on a special trip during Flying Scotsman’s visit to the Bluebell over Easter. Since all the trains were sold out within a very short time (hours for some trips) this was a very privileged invitation.



The loco is of course impressive, but the crowds were even more so. (Picture 1).

The party was impressive too, the following folk were also on the same trip.

Bill McAlpine (Lives near Henley and has a standard gauge railway in his garden). Bill owned 60103 for 23 years, and was somewhat envious of the crowds and attention that the loco

now draws. If they had been there when he owned it I suspect that the burden of ownership may have been less, and he might still have it. However, he did avoid the bankruptcy that ownership caused others, and may yet cripple the National Railway Museum, although the indications are set fair at the moment.

The Lord Lieutenant of Sussex – emphasising the importance of all railways to the local economy, and the heritage related tourism in particular. Time was when preserved lines had to struggle against the local councils – and the Bluebell had a cutting turned into a landfill rubbish dump – but no more, they are seen as vital and positive contributors to the community now.

The chairman of Network Rail, (Peter Hendy) who is also a supporter of the heritage movement and was proudly showing us all the picture of Torna-

do's speedo stuck on 100 mph somewhere in the York area. Steam on the main line has its special risks and issues, but support at the top is helpful, long may he reign!

David Shepherd – you know, the one who paints Elephants and Trains.

The Chief Engineer of the Romney Hythe and Dymchurch railway – who had arranged for their “Tornado” to be parked alongside 60103 for a photo shoot replicating one previously in the 1930s at Kings Cross shed.

So you can see I was (unusually) in exalted company. Not quite as good as being at the RSME with **El Presidente Dawson**, but nearly. It was an interesting trip.

The crowds are an interesting phenomenon that may be long lasting, or may perish with the ageing and disappearance of the generation that knew 60103 in its BR days, who knows? Let us hope it is the former, and that she goes from strength to strength in arousing interest in railways, their history and technology. For those who think steam is finished, I read only this week that some 70% of our electricity is still generated through steam turbines, so we have a way to go yet! One way to look at preserved locos is that they illustrate the technology and power of steam in an accessible way. Even at 5” gauge, I am always impressed by how much power and energy can be released from those tiny bits of coal, amazing!

(Picture 2) 60103 looks in great shape. Two defects were visible which is a



low number as anyone knows who operates a steam engine even in a small gauge. The r.h. piston rod gland was blowing giving her a hiss every revolution, and we watched from the saloon as a lubricating pipe was catching on the conjugated valve gear and wobbled. But the beat was perfect, so the difficult job of setting the valves has been done well,

probably with expert knowledge. She was not as clean as some preserved locos usually are – Clan Line being excellent in this regard – but she has been very busy since her return to the main line and the re-opening of the Settle and Carlisle, so some work grime is to be expected. I am not sure they have got the whistle right though, it screeches rather than whistles, but memories of spotting – mostly alongside the GN main line at Harold Wood – tell me it is not quite right.



As she ran round our train at East Grinstead and buff-ered up (Picture 3) we wondered when was the last occa-sion, if ever before, that those buffers had touched. The working career of the loco and the saloon overlapped by 30 years so it is reasonable to think they had met, if they did I am sure

there will be a picture of the event somewhere. Flying Scotsman must be one of the world's most photographed engines.

Finally, the picture of her smokebox from the saloon reveals a faint reflec-tion of the coach – hope it shows!

Back to proper railways next month.

WOLVERTON PUG

Some travel experiences in the Southern Hemisphere

My wife and I have recently returned from a two month holiday south of the Equator. It has involved most forms of transport-aeroplanes, cars, buses trains, boats and ships. Preparing for this epic trip took some pre-planning. In essence we were travelling to Australia where my wife has two daughters living, one at Creswick near Ballarat about 80 miles north west of Mel-bourne and the other in Sydney. After three days in Abu Dhabi, and a month in Australia, we joined the Queen Elizabeth and cruised to Japan.

After checking all the luggage restrictions it turned out that the most oner-ous was New South Wales Railway's XPT service from Melbourne to Syd-ney. The maximum dimension for a large bag is 70cm and a weight res-triction of 20 kilos. So after debating whether to risk a 75cm bag, which we already had, we decided to opt for two new bags both at 70cm. We were allowed two large bags each. In the end we took the two new bags and an older smaller bag plus a back pack. Part of the difficulty was the need for formal evening wear on the cruise. Being away for two months added to the logistics exercise.

Having arrived in Melbourne from Abu Dhabi, we spent a night in the Vibe Savoy Hotel opposite Southern Cross Station (the former Spencer Street). In the morning, we crossed the road and headed for the ticket office,

though these days most tickets can be bought from machines. I asked for two singles to Ballarat as we would be coming back here by road with Anne's daughter and son in law. So we were issued with a credit card known as a Myki card for about \$23 Aus (£14 each). Not bad for 72 miles and the poor rate of exchange. It's the same as an Oyster card in London. So says I "how long is it valid for?". "Ten years," comes the reply.

We board the 10.17 service to Wendouree, consisting of a V/Line Vlocity three car Bombardier diesel unit (built between 2005 and 2014). The train has 9 stops and is due in Ballarat at 11.40. The first two stops Footscray and Sunshine are pick up only being in the Melbourne suburban area. There is a slight delay in the journey as the route is single line with passing loops and we have to wait in one for a train to Melbourne to pass.

After chilling out for a few days at the step daughter and son in law's place in the bush they suggest we might like a ride on the broad gauge (5ft 3in) Victorian Gold Fields train (Victoria has just over twice as many km of broad gauge lines than standard gauge). It runs between Castlemaine and Maldon. The line is 17 km long and branches off the Melbourne to Bendigo line at Maldon Junction. Opened to serve the gold mining towns of Muckleford and Maldon in 1851 it closed in 1976. After a number of years a preservation group took on the restoration and the line reopened in 2004. Being in their summer meant steam was not running due to the fire risk. Where have I heard that before? However this is serious stuff out there. The line goes through tinder dry forest and a forest fire in Australia is really to be avoided.

So the day we go the loco is General Motors 1965 built single cab Y133. It looks like a class 20. They still use them on V/Rail shunting stock at Southern Cross Station Melbourne and elsewhere. The rolling stock was much older and consisted of some wooden bodied clerestory roofed bogie corridor vehicles. This ensemble of four vehicles set off from Castlemaine at a very leisurely pace at 11.45. The 17 km takes 45 mins. The track is fairly rough and I wouldn't like to go faster in those vehicles.

At Maldon one of the serviceable steam engines-1953 Vulcan Foundry 2-8-0, oil burner no J549 was standing outside in pristine condition, but not in steam.

There were four other locos outside the locked shed, in various states of decrepitude

No. E371- 0-6-2T David Munro and Co. South Melbourne-1892

No. D3 646- 4-6-0 Newport Workshops 1905

No. D3 619- 4-6-0 Newport Workshops 1914

No. K157- 2-8-0 Newport Workshops 1940

After a couple more weeks in Victoria it was time to move on to Sydney. We were booked on the 08.30 XPT from Southern Cross Melbourne to Sydney on Sunday 19th February and had to check in at least 30 mins before departure. We crossed Spencer Street from the Vibe Savoy Hotel into the sta-

tion and joined the queue at the check in desk. Up on the entry scales with the first large bag and "Sorry mate you're 1 kilo overweight". Take that off. Second large bag on and " half a kilo over". Put the third smaller case on " Eight kilos to spare there mate-you'll have to rearrange the loading". Pull out of the queue and start reloading three cases on the concourse! We join the train with ten minutes to spare.

We had opted for first class mainly for the extra space you normally get, but on the XPT the only difference from second class is the antimacassars. No free tea, coffee, water, food or anything. It's a trip to the buffet car each time and pay. All the seats are airline style with a drop down table on the seat back in front. It's 600 miles to Sydney and the train takes 11 hours. So no record breaking speeds here either.

The two power cars plus five car XPT departs from platform 2B one minute late. It's slow progress through the Melbourne suburbs, such places as Kensington, Tottenham, Albion, and St. Albans. there are fifteen stops on the 11 hour journey. A catering attendant comes through asking who would like hot food at lunch time and there is a choice of two or three. An announcement will be made when the hot food is ready for collection. When this announcement is duly made I make my way through the two adjacent cars to the buffet to collect and pay for the two hot meals. It's classic airline style in polystyrene dishes and flimsy plastic cutlery. Mince of some sort from memory with overcooked vegetables. I decide to purchase two small tinnies of fizz Victoria Bitter (it's all they had) to be informed that under their rules I could not purchase any more alcohol for another hour ! Some unruly travellers in the past presumably!

Somewhere out in the wilds beyond Wagga Wagga we cross to the right hand track and travel at slightly reduced speed. After some time we pass a freight train with the crew standing around the two large General Motors diesels. We continue on the wrong line for several more miles and the conductor apologises for the slow running due to being on the opposite track due to freight train having difficulties. Eventually we go over the facing points onto the correct line and pass a queue of several freight trains waiting to head west.

We duly arrive in Sydney at 19.58, eight minutes late, navigating the extensive suburbs, through the likes of Campbelltown, Glenfield and Liverpool during a fierce thunderstorm. Our next experience of intercity travel will not be for another month by which time we will have reached Japan.

So we disembark from the Queen Elizabeth at Kobe on the south side of Honshu near Osaka. We had already called there the week before during our cruise, when I had booked the two seats on the Shinkansen to Tokyo. You cannot book seats on Shinkansen except in Japan, unless you have a Japan Rail Pass. But as we were only making one single journey it was cheaper to pay for that alone.

The following day we were booked on the 10.06 Shin Kobe to Tokyo, which is a Nozomi service from Fukuoka. I decided we should get to the station by 09.30 to see what was going on. Luckily again our hotel was opposite the station, with a footbridge to the entrance. On the platform having passed through the ticket barrier there is another barrier about four feet high with sliding gates to access the tracks. The coach number is painted on the platform in front of these gates. There are two numbers-one for eight car and one for 16 car trains. We reach the platform in time to see the 09.29 from Okayama arrive and depart within seconds of 09.29. This is followed by the 09.36 also from Okayama, but with fewer stops than the 09.29 on its way to Tokyo. Then the 09.41 from Kumamoto to Shin Osaka; the 09.49 from Fukuoka and 10.01 Kukuoka to Shin Osaka. All arriving at our platform approx. 1.5 minutes before and leaving within seconds of departure time.

The same thing is happening on the opposite platform with trains from the Tokyo/Osaka direction. Likewise our 16 coach train arrives. We are in coach 8. The tannoy plays the usual catchy tune (Old Macdonald's Farm!), the platform gates open, the train doors open, people get off and we board. The train departs at 10.06 and one second. I had booked first class (green class). Not overly busy but fills comfortably in the 5 stops to Tokyo. Seats are all airline but there is plenty of legroom and a drop down table. Once again, nothing free is offered but a trolley dispensing snacks and drinks at modest prices. No real problem as the journey for the 330 miles is only two hours and forty seven minutes. Approaching Kyoto I catch sight of a steam loco (tender engine) in steam plus a couple of coaches. It's too far away to either identify or photograph. We arrive in Tokyo Central Station at 12.53 as booked. The train has seventeen minutes before it returns at 13.10. As soon as all the passengers are off, three cleaning staff per vehicle enter all 16 vehicles. They change the antimacassars and turn all the seats round so that everyone is facing forwards for the return journey. There is no litter to pick up!

Someone asked me what travelling at over 186 mph is like. I explain the only comparison I can make is what it's like just before an aeroplane touches the tarmac on landing.

The difference between Shinkansen and XPT is stark!

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

**The deadline for the June PROSPECTUS is
18 May. This is the final date.**

Contributions from all members are greatly welcomed

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

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The 10 17 to Wendouree at Southern Cross, Melbourne.

A trip on the Victorian Gold Fields Railway.
No steam because of the summer fire risk.





Y133 at Castlemaine

Vulcan Foundry 1953 built 2-8-0 J540 at Maldon





D3 646 4-6-0 awaiting repair at Maldon

Interior of the XPT





West bound Shinkansen leaves Shin Kobe
0941 departure from Kobe to Shin Osaka





Green (First) Class Shinkansen

D51 2-3-1 outside the Science Museum in Tokyo. It was closed despite it being a Bank Holiday.



Boiler tests

TO ALL RSME MEMBERS WHO OWN A STEAM LOCOMOTIVE

from Les Dawson and Nigel Penford

Please can you carry out these simple steps before presenting your locomotive for its 4 year hydraulic test.

Remove and plug safety valves and fill the boiler completely with water. Then use the hand pump or mains water to raise the pressure on the gauge to 80-100 psi. Check for any leaks and rectify. This means ANY leaks, regulator, gauge glass, blower etc. This will increase your chance of a successful test and avoid disappointment.

It is not the boiler inspector's job to make repairs or to make plugs and caps to carry out this test. The boiler inspectors also want to run their locomotives and enjoy the facilities of the club and not spend unnecessary amounts of time getting your locomotive ready for the test. It is YOUR job to present a locomotive ready for testing. If you have a problem both inspectors are willing to provide help and advice and time at their workshops to overcome any problems. Failure often disappoints. Don't set yourself up for failure by failing to carry out simple checks and rectifying simple faults before presenting your locomotive for a test.

A further reminder. Do not wait until the 4 year period expires and then expect the boiler inspector to drop everything to do a test for you. You would not do this for your car so don't do it with your locomotive.

One final important thing. If you have purchased a locomotive from a supplier or obtained one from a club member and it is covered by the "new written scheme" then you must notify the boiler inspector so that a new written scheme can be made out. This form is then forwarded to the Southern Federation to notify them of the change of ownership.

Rules on boiler testing are getting tighter and we have no option but to comply.

NOTIFICATION OF 2017 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the 2017 Annual General Meeting of the Reading Society of Model Engineers ('RSME') will be held in the Clubhouse, 82 Bath Road RG30 2BE, on Thursday 25th May 2017 at 7.30pm.

The Trustees Annual Report, the accounts, details of all nominations to Trustee and any motions to be put to the AGM. will be issued separately.

Stuart Kidd

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PLEASE NOTE THAT THE 2017 SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW DUE

2017 AGM AGENDA

Reading Society of Model Engineers

Registered Charity (CIO) 1163244

In accordance with the Notice given in the March 2017 Prospectus, the second Annual General Meeting of the charity will be held at 7.30pm at the RSME Clubhouse, 82 Bath Road, Reading RG30 2BE on Thursday 25th May 2017 for the following purposes:

1. To accept apologies for absence.
2. To accept the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 19th May 2016
3. To receive and accept the Trustees Annual Report for year ended 31st March 2017
4. To receive and accept the Financial Statements and Accounts for year ended 31st March 2017
5. To consider and vote on any motions proposed.
6. To elect Trustees
7. To appoint an Independent Examiner of the 2017/18 accounts
8. To transact any other business as agreed by the Chair.

DIARY

May 2017

Sunday	7th	Public running	13.30-16.30
Wednesday	10th	Beavers visit	16.45-17.45
		Brownies visit	18.00-19.00
Friday	12th	Grange pre school	12.30-14.30
Saturday	13th	Club running	11.00 onwards
Sunday	14th	Birthday party	11.00-13.30
			14.30-17.00
Monday	15th	Trustees meeting	19.30
Tuesday	16th	00 gauge DCC	
Sunday	21st	Birthday party	11.00-13.30
			14.30-17.00
Thursday	25th	AGM	19.30
Friday	26th	Young Engineers	
Saturday	27th	Young Engineers	11.00-13.30
		Birthday party	14.30-17.00
Sunday	28th	Birthday party	11.00-13.30
			14.30-17.00
Monday	29th	Public running	13.30-16.30

June 2017

Saturday	3rd	Birthday party	11.00-13.30
		Birthday party	14.30-17.00
Sunday	4th	Public running	13.30-16.30
Tuesday	6th	00 gauge	
Saturday	10th	Club running	11.00 onwards
Monday	12th	Trustees meeting	19.30
Saturday	17th	Open weekend	
Sunday	18th	Open weekend	
Tuesday	20th	00 gauge DCC	
Friday	23rd	Young Engineers	
Saturday	24th	Young Engineers	11.00-13.30
		Birthday party	14.30-17.00
Sunday	25th	Birthday party	11.00-13.30
		Rainbows visit	14.30-17.00
Tuesday	27th	Park Lane infants	11.30-14.00