

**Reading Society  
of Model  
Engineers  
Charity Number  
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**Free to members  
221**

# The Prospectus

**November 2023**



Mike Strain at a recent club running day with the North British Atlantic. "It will pull anything", says Andy.  
Photo Andy Midwinter

**From 2-2-2s to 4-8-8-4s  
See inside**

# THE VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

John Billard

The trustees met on 9th October. Meetings are always interesting and productive and this was no exception.

We were pleased to hear that the accounts at the end of September are showing a good surplus and this is all to do with the efforts members put in at our public events. A meeting has been held with external advisers to provide advice on improving our financial processes. The trustees can then review those recommendations with a view to adopting changes for next year with the possible use of a computerized dedicated club accounts system. More immediately we are installing an aerial booster for our Wi-Fi system which should cure certain problems particularly with our external card readers.

We were pleased to report that the membership total is approaching 100. We are considering whether it is necessary to have to complete a form every year for renewing members. This is not yet decided.

Our projects and maintenance team have said that the exterior lighting is almost complete but improvements to security have to continue and a repair made to the fuel storage lid broken in a vandal attack. We have returned to the question of fitting hand rails in the members toilet and this is being considered. And we are looking at the possibility of acquiring a defibrillator.

The club has been asked about the possibility of offering running at half term for the public. But it was agreed that the club's pool of volunteers is stretched already and we cannot commit to this.

On parties, one more to do in 2023, bringing the total to 53. On top of these, there have been eleven weekday visits by Rainbows, Nurseries, School groups, as well as six Special Needs afternoons. The dedication of volunteers and contribution to club finances was noted.

We have again looked at the possibility of an external visit for members and we will let members know as soon as something has been decided.

The meeting concluded by considering the arrangements for the annual general meeting of which details below.

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**16 November 2023 at 19 30 sharp**

Members will have received information including minutes, agenda, the annual report and a **call for nominations and motions. These should be addressed to the Secretary RSME, Stuart Kidd 25 Rangewood Avenue, RG30 3NN on or before 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2023** as per the order paper. Details of these will then be circulated to members in advance of the meeting.

Any questions on this process may be addressed to Stuart Kidd on 07966 278968.

## MODEL ENGINEERING 140 YEARS AGO

John Billard

For those members fortunate enough to be able to attend Thursday evening meetings at the club house a while ago I was able to bring an example of an engine constructed in the mid Victorian age.

When I was setting up my workshop in the late 1970s I followed an advertisement in Model Engineer magazine which included "Brass Loco 3 3/4 in gauge, £10".

I added this to the items purchased but soon discovered it had a very interesting provenance and it has stood on my mantelpiece ever since. Regrettably it is not complete lacking a tender and a number of small parts. But sufficient remains to show very proficient workmanship. It is of the Great Northern type and has a spirit fired boiler and full Stephenson link valve gear for its inside cylinders and 2-2-2 wheel notation.

Let the story be taken up by Jim Crebbin in The Model Engineer of September 21st 1944.

### Models and the late Sir Henry J. Wood

by J. C. Crebbin

*In the 'eighties my favourite shop window of all those which displayed model locomotives, etc, in London—such as Stevens' Model Dockyard, Whitneys, Lucas & Davies, Bateman, Bedford, Hurst & Lloyd, and Negretti & Zambra—was H. J. Wood's, of Oxford Street. In his window were exhibited some really fine model locomotives of about 5/8 in. to the foot scale, and mostly of the two principal G.N.R. types ;they all were fitted with proper locomotive-type boilers, fired by methylated spirit burners, and had correct reversing gear, etc.*

*Summoning up courage one day, I timidly entered Mr. Wood's shop (timidly, because boys, as a rule, received brusque treatment from some of the firms at that period). Behind the counter was a kindly, bearded gentleman who asked my business.*

*I explained to him that I had no money to spend but would be so pleased if he would let me admire closely one of his beautiful models. He smiled kindly, and opened the door leading to the back of the shop, and I remember hearing a piano being played. He returned and placed on the counter a newly-painted model of a Stirling G.N. 2-2-2 inside cylinder single of the 7 ft. in. type. Seeing my enthusiastic interest, the old gentleman invited me to visit his shop whenever I was passing.*

*I have often wondered if the strains of music I heard from upstairs, in that shop, were being played by his son Henry. At the back of the premises was a workshop where three skilled mechanics were employed, although Mr. Wood himself was a skilled model engineer.*

*Later on in life, and as a result of that visit, I became personally acquainted with the younger, Mr. Henry Wood (as he was at that time), and I became an ardent fan, attending many of his Promenade Concerts. Sir Henry has told*

me) on occasions, how much he valued his devoted parents, describing them in one letter as "the finest in the world."

Last Christmas, he asked me if I could find a model locomotive, of his father's manufacture. As a result I appealed to Mr. Percival Marshall, who kindly assisted by mentioning the matter in "Smoke Rings."

This brought two replies and, as a result, I obtained, the loan of two models. One was an old locomotive, and, although painted in Stroudley L.B. & S.C. colours, was unlike any locomotive built for that company. It was in such a bad state of repair that I have not, so far, been able to test it under steam.

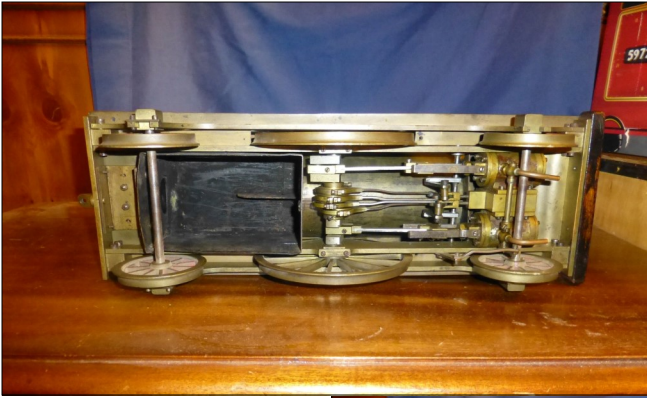
The second was a beautiful table engine, illustrated opposite (not reproduced, Ed), and was exhibited at the recent Kodak Exhibition. It is in keeping with the first-class work carried out by Wood's, and was lent to me by Mr. S. T. Beringer, of Falmouth. I am unable to give any details as to its history, and the late Sir Henry had no recollection of the model being constructed. It has apparently been in the U.S.A. for some period, from the fact that a number of shipping labels are affixed to the case. I consider that the date of construction was about 1870-1880.

In conclusion, the late Sir Henry Wood was a keen painter and a woodworker of no mean ability; but, remembering his father's interest, he visited model engineering exhibitions and was a keen admirer' of the model engineer's handicraft.

Both his father and mother were keen musicians, and I venture to suggest that the origin of the Promenade Concerts may have been due to the fertile brain of that early model engineer, the late H. J. Wood.



The maker's plate measures an inch and an eighth by three quarters.



Direct drive Stephenson's valve gear is fitted. The grate or spirit lamp is missing together with cab details and pipework. And of course, the tender.

I consider that it would be impossible to restore this engine. It would not be right to modify or emulate the work of the builder. Even if, the 3 3/4" gauge would be problematic.

Photos John Billard



## DAVID ARTHUR COLE

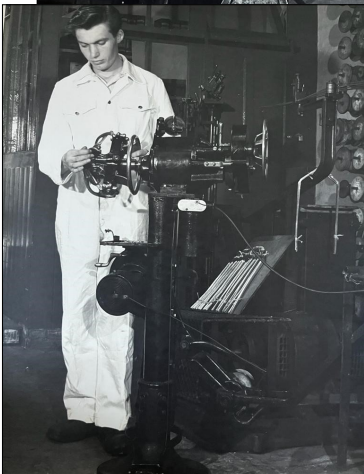
1933—2023



We were very sorry to hear of the death of Dave Cole at the end of September aged 90. Dave was a long standing member of RSME and remained active with the club right up to his demise.

RSME was well represented at his funeral and we send our deep condolences to Fay and her family.

Dave was a qualified professional electrical engineer. His family have provided some photographs of his early career training in Manchester that I know will be of interest to members. If anyone can shed light on these activities the family would very much like to know. *Editor.*



## MORE JULIET

from Terry Wood

After running the Juliet on a recent club run I noticed that when initially lighting the fire up and getting under steam the fire got hot very quickly but after running the engine around the track it was very difficult to get under way again after putting coal on and it took about three quarters of an hour for the fire to reach a high enough temperature to make the safety valve



blow again even when using the electric blower all that time.

It then came to me that there was a buildup of ash that was stopping air getting through the fire and that was slowing it building up again raking the ash tended to make things worse so I decided to try and get more draught through the fire by removing one of the fire bars.



The grate is made up using two pieces of M4 studding with a nut and washer between each bar so to remove one bar and keep the spacing even the whole grate had to be unbolted and instead of one washer and a nut one washer a nut then another washer was fitted to widen the distance between the bars. All the washers had to be the same width for the fire bars to be an equal distance apart, this will hopefully help the fire burn better and make it possible to run the loco continuously round the track or if not at least make it quicker for the pressure to build up again.

I have also made another grate using 1 mm thick bars just as an experiment to see if that improves it still although these bars won't last as long.



## A VISIT TO GUILDFORD

**John Billard introduces the story**

I was contacted by the Society of Model and Experimental Engineers asking if Reading members might like to join them at their annual running day at the Guildford club's tracks. David and Lily Scott were first out of the traps (*it must have been the free biscuits, Ed*) and this is their tale.

David and Lily continue .....

My hand reached for the mouse and we were going. An email later said we needed to take something to run... So I pondered and a visit to all my usual web sites with an idea. You see our smallest locomotive driven by a battery drill was getting quite hard to keep on pulling the trigger so a much improved right angle drive unit was searched for to put the drill into a more natural position. Screwfix wanted quite a few pounds for their versions, B & Q did not have any so Toolstation had something new from Milwaukee. Of course there was a catch. Not in stock. Delivery only and £5.00. For postage. But if I also purchased an £8.00 forged clamp, postage was free and we get the clamp for £3.00. Plus we did not have to drive all the way to Toolstation (1½ miles)

They arrived the next day and I vanished into the workshop to do a much needed improvement. A double ended spindle with hexagons. We need it for the morning. Faced off on the Myford a quick divide by counting 10 teeth each time saw it divided into 6. It was going to be a fast mill mostly by eye ending up with the need for an 11 mm socket. After dinner we went down and assembled everything back. I was still amazed at the way the Allen keys had just been the right ones grabbed first and in spite of being rusty the old spindle had come out with ease.

Our luck continued the next morning with a day that was not too hot or too cold. The car is well practiced with the journey and we were soon there. I carried the wheels and Lily carried the motive power in a bag into the steaming bays.

We were well recognised from other events and after several chats went to assemble our humble beast onto a trolley. And everything went well. Well our second journey round was a bit of a cheat when I slipped the socket off just before the tunnel and we free-wheeled down to the bottom of the track. On our first go round the drill was not fast enough to keep up down the slope.

Our transport was eating a battery every four laps now we had perfected the savings. Four batteries later we defected to the 7 1/4" and relaxed. Then swapped trains. I jumped off and got our Alex a mug of tea (two sugars) anyone counting and three biscuits. Which propelled the Standard 2 tank for several laps. I got a superb "It is your turn David!" So I did three laps, oh what a wonderful machine and I had soon perfected the ups and downs and just how much brake had to be applied. I would also have worked day and night just to own her.

Every visit previously there had been an interested woman running the transporter in the steaming bays and this time we got chatting. Oh, it turned out that her dad had been quite high up in the early preservation movement and she had grown up on various locomotive footplates. She knew Clive Groom very well down on the Bluebell.

She got to drive Mallard when it had been coupled with Gresley's special tender so that several could have goes with her. "I managed four stations!" she smiled.

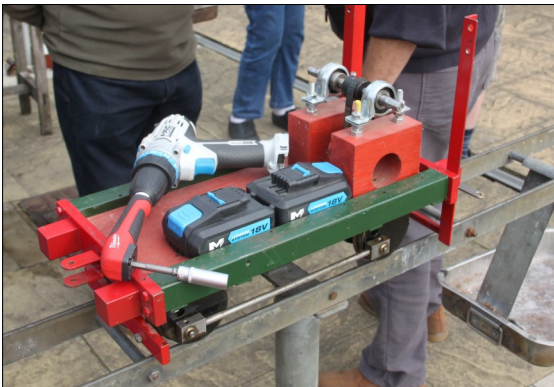


Too soon I was helping someone lift a loco into its box, she like all his locomotives had run superbly. We chatted about his LittleLEC visit to Reading which he had enjoyed. We had witnessed her earlier try at the Guildford event which was a bit trying as she was a bit new. Yes some engines went far better after five months running in and did not disappoint when they broke the speed record.



SMEE's Peter Wardropper tends his Brighton Atlantic with a Great Northern version for company

RSME's Alex Webb attended with a much admired BR Standard Class 2 tank in 7 1/4" gauge.



David and Lily Scott's drill battery locomotive created attention.



Making a rare appearance in these pages is John Billard with his very special “Cookham Manor” built by the late Ken Morris. No 7808 ran around the raised track for a continuous three hours.

A very unusual mining locomotive and train ran for many circuits.

Photos David Scott



## “Flying Scotsman” and Big Boy Face to Face by Alex Bray

Thanks to a website reported by Mayank Yadav, we can now enjoy a good quality profile picture of LNER A3 “Flying Scotsman” 4073 and Union Pacific Big Boy 4017 (“E. Roland Harriman”) face to face at Green Bay City during the tour in 1970

Green Bay is a city in the U.S. state of Wisconsin, at the southern end of Green Bay, an arm of Lake Michigan. It is home to the United States’ National Railroad Museum, which, among other artefacts, houses LNER A4 Pacific “Dwight D. Eisenhower” 4496 (later 60006).

The “Big Boy” has the longest engine body of any reciprocating steam locomotive, longer than two 40-foot buses. The “Big Boys” were also the heaviest reciprocating steam locomotives ever built; the combined weight of the 772,250 lb engine and 436,500 tender outweighed a Boeing 747.

“Flying Scotsman” set two world records for steam traction, becoming the first locomotive to reach the officially authenticated speed of 100 miles per hour (161 km/h)

on 30 November 1934, and setting the longest non-stop run of 422 miles on 8 August 1989 while in Australia.

For more information about the “Flying Scotsman” 1970 tour of the USA, here is the reference:

Richard Hinchcliffe and Bill Wagner, “*Flying Scotsman*” in *America - The 1970 Tour*, Amberley Publishing (£15.99)

<b>“Flying Scotsman”</b>			<b>BigBoy</b>
4-6-2	Wheel Arrangement		4-8-8-4
3	Cylinders		4
19in x 26in	Size		23.75 in × 32 in
38 in	Leading Wheels Diameter		36 in
80 in	Driving Wheels Diameter		68 in
44 in	Trailing Wheel Diameter		42 in
75 in (max)	Boiler Diameter		107 in
(post 1947 as A3) 220 psi	Boiler Pressure		300 lb/in <sup>2</sup>
29,385lbs	Tractive Effort		135,375 lbs
	Locomotive Length		85 ft 3+2/5 in
70 ft 2in	Overall Length		132 ft 9+1/4 in



**Above** Flying Scotsman and Big Boy face to face in Green Bay City. Photo Bill Wagner.

**Left** LNER Class A4 4496 Dwight D Eisenhower 2010 at Green Bay City. Photo-DUALREQ

## DIARY

### NOVEMBER 2023

Sunday	5th	Public running	
		Setting up from 09.30	12.00-16.00
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>9th</b>	<b>On the Bench Night</b>	<b>19.30</b>
Saturday	11th	Club running	10.30 onwards
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>16th</b>	<b>RSME AGM</b>	<b>19.30</b>
Tuesday	21st	Club running	10.30 onwards
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>23rd</b>	<b>Club Talk</b>	<b>20.00</b>
		<b>T B C</b>	

### DECEMBER 2023

Sunday	3rd	Public running	12.00-16.00
		Setting up from 0930	
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>9th</b>	<b>Santa Specials</b>	
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>10th</b>	<b>Santa Specials</b>	
Monday	11th	Trustees meeting	19.30
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>14th</b>	<b>On the Bench Night</b>	<b>19.30</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>16th</b>	<b>Santa Specials</b>	
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>17th</b>	<b>Santa Specials</b>	
Tuesday	19th	Club running	10.30 onwards
Thursday	21st	Quiz Night	19.30 onwards

**Note from the Editor. Please provide photographs as separate files and not embedded into the text. No pdf files please.**

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 December issue is 20 November**

Contributions may be submitted in had 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.*

## RSME AGM

**Please support RSME by attending the AGM on 14th November.**