

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



**President
John Billard**

**Secretary
Stuart Kidd
07966 278968**

**Editor
John Billard
johnbillard72
@gmail.com**

**01189 340381
07834 998971**

**Free to members
245**

The Prospectus

October 2025



Ex GWR 2-8-0/T 4247 takes water at Paignton having brought in the 16.00 service from Kingswear on 31 August 2025
Photo John Billard

**RSME NEWS
CZECHIA PART 5
CAB TO CUSHIONS
SALE ITEMS
RSME AGM 23 OCTOBER**

THE VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

John Billard

The trustees met on the 15th September. Our usual minute taker Stephen was away and Jim Brown remained in the Royal Berkshire Hospital Awaiting further action to secure his long-term health. We all joined together in wishing Jim an early and complete recovery.

Last month I reported that we were considering the question of DBS checks for drivers at the club. After further discussion, we have decided not to make this compulsory. It will be up to individuals if they wish to go ahead with this but the trustees would not be involved.

There has been an idea that the O gauge section might be revived. So far this has been no progress on this so if members do wish to be involved please contact us to make arrangements.

It is pleasing to note that our membership total is over 100 with individuals still joining including the younger element. It has proved the benefit of making our membership fee a flat rate of £20 and we have no plans to change this which in any case would be for the AGM to decide.

On project and maintenance the awkward job of painting the container roofs continues and any more volunteers for this job please do not hesitate to apply! Problems with the ground level lift have been fixed and plans are being made for improvements to the raised track loading ramp. However there are ongoing problems with the class 58 and 37 electrics. The club Baldwin has suffered injector problems for some time and this is now being dealt with.

The September public running was a special one in that we decided to donate all ticket sales to the Sue Ryder charity. With a small top up from the club this amount to £1,000. We convey our thanks to all members who made this day such a success.

Private parties are still going well although one had to be cancelled because of adverse weather. 720 Santa tickets were released on 11 September and sales have continued apace. We have streamlined the sales process which has produced numerous compliments and grateful thanks to Peter and Donald for this huge opportunity. The dates chosen 6 /7th 13th/ 14th and 20th December. This includes an extra day to deal with demand. It is vital that we have as many members as possible to assist with this event. Please let Peter Culham know that you can attend.

I have been looking for a volunteer to take over the running of Prospectus next year. I hope to report that I have a willing volunteer and who I will introduce and will be assisting me in future issues prior to a full editorship.

The trustees are very pleased to have had an offer from a retiring model engineer for model 5 inch gauge Firefly GWR 2-6-2 tank engine. This is virtually complete and require some fairly minor finishing. We have been pleased to accept this most generous offer. Arrangements will be made to bring it to the club and decide how it is to be completed and used for the benefit of our membership. *Continued on page 12*

WOLVERTON PUG GOES TO CZECHIA Part 5

19th, 20th 21st September 2024



The first of the organised preserved diesel trips began on Thursday 19th September with Grumpy no. 751.149.

We left Kolin at 08.34 for a two hour run towards the east to Potstejn, the purpose for which was to visit a brewery. However Nigel and I plus a few others decided to walk down from the station to the small town to have a look round. We had a very nice traditional lunch in a brew-pub called Clock, where I had goulash. We returned to Kolin

via the same route through Hradec Kravove, taking slightly longer. In the evening we went one stop south from Kolin to a place called Hlizev to visit another brew-pub called Pivovar Holan'an. After sampling a few of their beers we returned to Kolin on another EMU. One of our party was a bit late getting to the brew-pub due to failing to disembark in time from a different part of the train and having to return from the next stop on the next train towards Kolin.

Friday 19th was the first of the organised preserved diesel trips and we departed from Kolin at 08.08, with the Grumpy 751.149. Shortly after leaving Kolin we passed through Velim, where the famous test track is, which has been used to test several new locos and units that have been built in Europe for the UK. Not much to see, as the connecting line runs along the edge of a cornfield and behind trees, where in the distance there were some buildings visible.

We ran on a freight line between Prague Liben and Prague Holesovice continuing on via the large junction town of Usti having followed the River Vltava from Prague and turning South-west, through the heavily industrialised region of Most, which like most of Europe has seen a decline in recent years. Near Most we crossed over a private industrial electric railway run by Czech Coal Services Group. It was operated by, at one time, 30 crocodile electric locomotives of class 127 in green livery which were built by Skoda between 1984 and 1989. They have a DC system of 1500 volts. It was difficult to see much being some distance below and obscured by overgrown parts of the vast system. The coal is open cast around Tre-





busice and is moved to the coal processing plant at Cepirohy south of Most and then fed to Pocerady power station by diesels, as the power station line is not electrified.

Continuing our journey towards Plzen our next overnight stop, we through the German border town of Cheb and shortly afterwards the beautiful spa town of Mariánské Lázně.

We were booked to stand in the station at Plana u Mariánských Lázní a mere 10 minutes beyond Mariánské Lázně from 14.39 to 17.10 waiting for an engineering possession to be given up after a week's closure. We were all expecting an overrun, as is often the case.

Most of us decided to hike up the fairly long steep hill from the station up to the very pretty little town to obtain some food and refreshment, where they had Lobkowicz Czech Pilsner beers. Mindful that it would be foolhardy to assume an overrun, we returned in time to be back by 17.00.

Without any sort of fuss we glided out of Plana u Mariánských Lázní bang on time at 17.10.

It was less than an hour down towards Plzeň hlavní nádraží but we were pulled up at a red signal in the suburban station of Plzeň Křimice and stood for a few minutes. As they don't have central door-locking a reasonable number of us bailed out onto the platform complete with luggage, as the station was on the tram route to our hotel!

The next day Saturday 21st was an early start from Plzeň at 07.34, meaning an even



earlier tram from outside the IBIS hotel to Plzeň hlavní nádraží main station. We departed south on time behind 751-149 our trusty Grumpy and after an hour and a quarter we reached the last station in Czechia before the German border at České Kubice. There appeared to be very little here in the middle of a forest. The first station in Germany is Furth im Wald and a local train runs to and from České Kubice and Furth im Wald 4 times a week! From where there is an hourly service to Schwandorf.

Outside the station was a dubious looking

hotel, which advertised some sort of night life! The grumpy duly ran round and we set off back reaching Domazlice, where we left the route we came by and headed south following the German border to a place called Janovice nad Uhlovov, where the loco ran round again and proceeded to Zela Ruda Alzbet-in. This station actually sits on the border and a line marked on the platform, enables people to stand with one foot in Czechia and the other in Germany, which of course I did! Needless to say it had a staffed buffet serving food and liquid refreshments. The German name of the place is Bayerisch Eisenstein. Bavaria to the south, Bohemia to the north.

The loco ran round here and set off north again, turning south at Klatov, then east to Horazdovici predmesti, running round there, where there were some preserved diesels and the frames, pistons and wheels of an 0-8-0 steam loco. Running round again at Nepomuk to reach Blatna on the line from Prague to various places near the German border.



At Blatna we shunted into some sidings and a maintenance depot, in order to perform a special cake cutting ceremony celebrating one of the oldest and faithful members of the touring organisation (Grumpy Tours) who is suffering from MS.

Having completed this presentation, we re-boarded the train and returned to Kolin via a rare curve, thus avoiding the main station

in Plzen and then via Prague.

One night left in Czechia before setting off for a night at Bamberg and return to the UK the next day. *To be concluded, Ed*

From Cushions to Cab

by Alec Bray

“What on earth are you doing, father?” What father has not heard those words, or similar, uttered by a daughter or other family member?

This time, there was good reason. As one of his two daughters entered the dining room one evening, the rather portly father was busily squeezing himself between the backs of a row of dining room chairs and the dining room wall.

“If I can get through this”, came the reply, “my biggest engineman can!”

The father was (Herbert) Nigel Gresley (later Sir). Nigel Gresley was very concerned about the cab comfort and cab layout for his enginemen, and he wanted to be sure that the corridor proposed for the A1 4-6-2 locomotive could be conveniently used by the locomotive crews – although at 5 feet (1.524 m) high and 18 inches (46 cms) wide, with two steps up and down at each end to clear the bottom of the water tank, it was a crouch and a squeeze

at the best of times. The passageway had single circular window in the tender rear panel, placed high up and to the right of the corridor connection.

LNER

Why construct a tender with a gangway and corridor connection?

The LNER derived two thirds of its income from freight (including coal haulage). However, the main image that the LNER wanted to present was one of glamour, of fast trains and sophisticated destinations. Advertising was highly



sophisticated and advanced - and under William Teasdale, Advertising Manager between 1923 and 1927, the LNER started developing advertising practices recognisable as early forms of Integrated Marketing Communications: in 1929, the LNER chose the typeface Gill Sans (designed by Eric Gill) as the standard typeface for the company. Soon it appeared on every facet of the company's identity, from metal locomotive

nameplates and hand-painted station signage to printed restaurant car menus, timetables and advertising posters.

From 1924 the LNER publicity began proclaiming that it served “The Drier Side of Britain”, its territory and resorts having less average rainfall than the rest of England.



This phrase was projected across print media adverts, editorial copy, handbooks, leaflets and posters, impressing on the consumer that if they to travel via the LNER for their holiday, they were guaranteed to have a sunny, less wet time. “It's Quicker By Rail” is another memorable catchphrase announced by the LNER advertising department, but there was much more to their sophisticated marketing strategy than catchphrases. Some of the best advertising of these years was used to promote trains and services. Many of the railway

companies had stressed the speed and comfort of their trains, particularly those that operated the lines between London and Scotland. And the LNER publicity department dreamed up the idea of a complete “non-stop” journey from London Euston to Edinburgh Waverley – despite the fact that the train had to slow nearly to a crawl to go through York station! So there needed to



be a change of locomotive crew – driver and (particularly) fireman – if the train was not going to stop *en-route*. There was only one way for the relief crew to move from the leading coach to the cab of the locomotive when it was all in motion, and that was to make a walk-way through the tender.

For this non-stop service, ten “corridor” tenders were initially built, and were attached to some of the A1 and A3 Pacific locomotives. Further batches were constructed (with modifications), and in all a total of twenty-two corridor tenders were built. By 1937, all the corridor tenders were ultimately attached to Class A4 Pacifics. The tenders contained enough coal (around 10 tons) for the journey, and took on water from water troughs using the tender scoop.

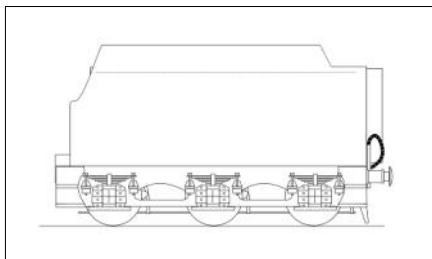
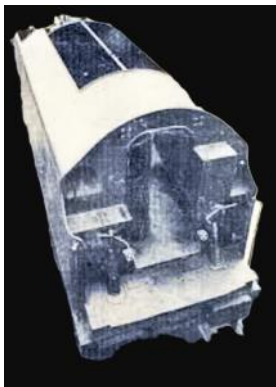
LMS

The LNER was not the only company to have a corridor tender – the LMS had one too! The LMS was a rival to the LNER for travel to Scotland, and it, too, advertised “non-stop” services. But the LMS “non-stop” trains had a brief stop at Carlisle to change crews – the “Coronation Scot”, for example, was “non-stop” only in the sense that there was no stop for passengers to embark or disembark.

The LMS corridor tender was built for a completely different reason: it was part of a mobile test plant, a set of vehicles used for testing locomotives in motion. It had to be very different design to the LNER version, as Gresley had patented his design in August 1928. A patent is only granted for an implementation of an idea, not an idea itself. So the LMS tender had a

wide central corridor, which left only a small space for coal. This didn’t matter too much, as the tender did not travel far or fast – and it could use “bagged” coal made up as one hundredweight (cwt., approx. 50 kg) bags, which was very useful to measure coal consumption and comparison of grades of coal. The remaining coal space was used for loose coal needed for the times when the locomotive was not under test and for standby purposes. A water meter was fitted to give the amount of water taken from the tender.

The LMS Mobile Test Plant was made up of the locomotive corridor tender (when testing steam locomotives), the LM Region No.3 Dynamometer Car M45049 and Mobile Test Units Nos. 1, 2 and 3 which were all designed and built by the LMS at Derby Carriage & Wagon Works in 1938 but not completed until after World War 2. The Mobile Test Units were electrically braked vehicles equipped with generators which could vary the load as required.



NOTE: there are no side elevation pictures or drawings of the LMS Corridor tender on the Internet, so the drawing shown here is conjectural – a sort of “artist’s impression”. (It might be another “scoop” for “Prospectus”).)

BR

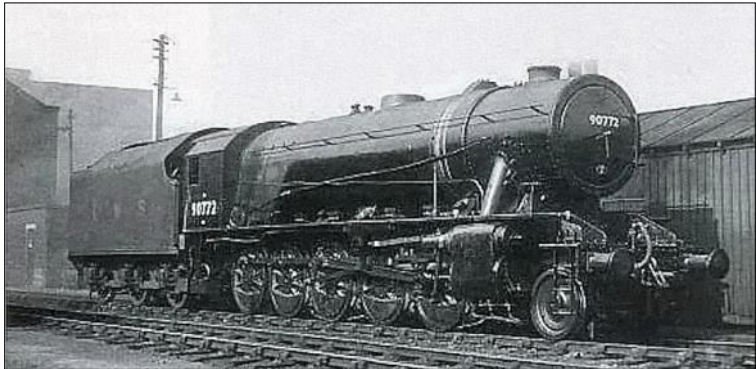
British Railways built a corridor tender, too!

There was just one of these, and it was built specifically for the third Gas

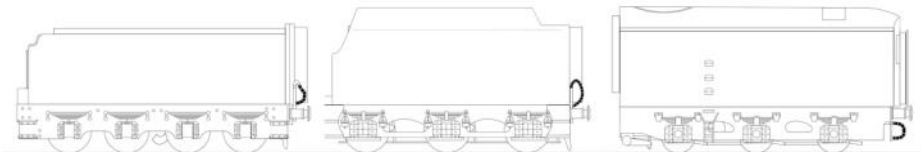


Turbine experimental locomotive GT3. The gas turbine power plant and mechanical transmission were built on a 4-6-0 steam locomotive-style chassis. The tender was permanently coupled behind the locomotive. At the front end there was a Spanner train heating boiler, and at the rear there was a crew toilet compartment. A British Standard corridor connection

on the rear lead into a central corridor, with the boiler water tank located underneath: the fuel tanks for the gas turbine were placed either side of this central corridor.



The tender’s six-wheel chassis was based on the British Railways practice at the time, although it had specially shaped side frames. The tanks and body work were specially designed, and the tender was assembled at the Vulcan Foundry. *To be continued. BR WD 2-10-0 with ex-LMS corridor tender.*



Above: Three corridor tenders, LNER, LMS (conjectural), GT3

FOR SALE

As one gets older, you begin to realise that certain objectives are slipping below the horizon. I realise that at the age of 86, I won't finish either of the two locomotives I have under construction. So I want to dispose of these two locos in their current state. These are a 5" A3 and 5" A4 both kits from Modelworks and replace them with a ready built loco. This will enable me to enjoy some time on the club track .
As a result I also want to dispose of my workshop equipment and materials as listed below.

LNER A3 PACIFIC

Modelworks. 5" Gauge about 70% completed

LNER A4 PACIFIC

Modelworks. 5" Gauge about 80% completed

Both with certificated boilers, and tenders. Most parts to complete are available or can be obtained from Model Engineers Laser. Includes instructions for the A4. Both need boilers fitting, piping, bodywork and timing.

Tom Senior M1 Milling Machine

3 ph metric with DRO. Horizontal and vertical attachment with cutters. Milling vices, angle plates, boring tool, rotary table.

Harrison M250 Lathe

3 ph metric, suds tank, chucks and collets, 12 in faceplate, Duplex D27H toolpost grinder internal and external, change wheels, centres etc.

Transwave 3 ph converter

For the machines above.

Clarke 12 speed bench drill

13 mm chuck, set of counterbore cutters

Miscellaneous

Various metals, stainless steel, brass, gunmetal, phosphor bronze, cast iron, nickel silver, various sizes, round, hex, flat and sheet.

15" square surface plate, tapping stand, arbor press (1/2 ton), height gauge, gasket punches, compact bender, various V blocks, number/letter punches, loads of stainless steel nuts and bolts.

Listed in brief detail, any reasonable offers considered.

Stuart Higgins, 0118 942 3120

Editor's note; This notice is being repeated from the September issue as most regrettably it appeared with a incorrect telephone number because of a production error. My apologies to Stuart. Please contact him for the latest details.

CLUB NEWS

From the tracks—from our own special correspondent

Wednesday 3 September

A rainy day and work was restricted. I left after a while as I had much to do elsewhere.

Wednesday 10 September

Another rainy day. Spent the limited time tidying up the workshop throwing out a lot of rubbish then moved on to the garden container until it became too wet.

Wednesday 17 September

We have had visitors over the fence from the travellers and have been trying to get in touch with the council. This curtailed the work as there was concern about opening up the containers. Things were kept locked up. Peter eventually was able to speak to the council without much success but action did take place in the end and they left the place clean and tidy.

Wednesday 24 September

A busy day today looking at the swing bridge, John Evans repaired the club WC and the rest of the day was spent helping Marcus and Peter fit new injectors to the club Baldwin. The pipe work was altered to accept the larger size. On firing up and testing one worked and the other didn't so more attention required. Ideally we should have used silver solder, we used what was available, leadfree which has a much higher melting point. The rest of the gang were working hard, George on the strimmer most of the morning and John Evans on the mower with Mick Strain finishing a wagon on his own. Mike Manners has finished the exit point in the ground level station which is now remotely controlled by the staff which should help with the usual staff shortages. Rob Ashfield, poor soul, was renewing the sleepers all on his own out there somewhere. A good team.

Saturday 27 September Club Running

Not much going on today although a good number of members turned up, Alex, Nigel Braun, Ashfield and some new members. No one brought a loco but Quinn fired up the club Polly for a short time. Dan ran his train on the 00 layout with his seven-year old son and showed new members it working. The club 37 was pressed into service to let new young members drive. Marcus was repairing Peter's Maid of Kent in the workshop which after the repair of the motion only runs on one cylinder. An air supply was fixed up and it is thought that the die block has worn badly in forward gear. The advice was to reverse the curved slot in the expansion link. This would show up a problem whether the eccentrics have moved when the combination detached. Stuart Higgins dropped off some brass material for which the club has paid and this will be most useful.

Notice of RSME 2025 Annual General Meeting

The 2025 Annual General Meeting of the Reading Society of Model Engineers is due to be held in the Clubhouse, on **Thursday 23rd October 2025 at 7.30pm.**

Three trustees, Peter Culham, Stuart Kidd and Nigel Penford are due to retire by rotation. John Billard is seeking re election as president.

Trustee nominations and motions should be addressed to the Secretary, RSME Trustees, Stuart Kidd 25 Rangewood Avenue, RG30 3NN or email stuartnkiddnkidd@aol.com on or before 12th October 2025.

Each nomination should be signed by the nominee, and a proposer. The nominee should indicate their willingness to serve, that they are not disqualified under the Charities Act, and that they have read the Charity Commission Guidance Notes CC3 and CC3a.

Both nominee and proposer should be current members of the RSME.

Any motions for consideration at the AGM must be proposed and seconded by current members of the RSME.

In accordance with RSME practice the president shall be in office for a period of three years. Having taken soundings, the trustees are willing for John Billard to be nominated to serve for a further period, subject to the wishes of the AGM.

A further notice will be issued to members before the meeting setting out any nominations and motions received for consideration, the meeting agenda and annual accounts.

Stuart Kidd

Secretary RSME Trustees

New member The club welcomes Mia Gwen Chell of Reading.

Member Cliff Perry who some of you will remember by his ownership of Clan Line passes his eightieth birthday in October. He now owns the late Brian Hadnam's Collett 0-6-0.

By way of celebration he has secured a running day on the Pinewood track on the 1st November. He is inviting his friends and folk who have helped his enjoyment of live steam over the last 30 years which includes a significant contribution from RSME members. The Nigel, Les, Mike,(3 off) Andrew, Peter, Alex, Dave, Chris, Johns of this world have all helped along with others. First come first served to a limited list will apply. Please indicate to Cliff if you wish to attend, to bring a partner and/or a loco. There are 7.25 and 5 inch tracks on the ground. No raised track, but good offloading facilities. At 4 pm on that day a simple meal will be provided in the (Licensed) cafe on the Pinewood site.

Reply to clifford.perry@btopenworld.com

Continued from page 2

Finally a reminder that our AGM is on 23 October for a 19.30 start in the club house. We are calling for nominations for trustee posts as usual. My three year term as president concludes but I'm willing to serve for a further subject to the wishes of the AGM.

Our next meeting is on 13 October.

Postscript Jim returned home on 1 October.

DIARY

OCTOBER 2025

Sunday	4th	Public running	Setting up from 09.30 onwards
Saturday	11th	Club running	10.30 onwards
Monday	13th	Trustees meeting	19.30
16th—19th Midlands Model Engineering Exhibition			
Thursday	23rd	RSME AGM	19.30
Saturday	25th	Club running	10.30 onwards

NOVEMBER 2025

Sunday	5th	Public running	Setting up from 09.30 onwards
Saturday	11th	Club running	10.30 onwards
Monday	13th	Trustees meeting	19.30
Monday	27th	Club running	10.30 onwards

Meetings are held every Thursday at 19.30 in the club house.

The Wednesday Warriors do the hard work at the club site from 09.30.

*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 November issue is 20 October***

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

johnbillard72@gmail.com

Please note my new e mail address