

THE NEW PINWOOD EXPRESS

Pinwood (Wokingham) Miniature Railway



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Cover picture

Derek Tulley filling the tank of Paul Archer's Polly to the great interest of Derek's grandson Adam Jenkins, on a visit from Cheshire.

Photo: John Keane, August 2009

EDITORIAL

As mentioned in the Secretary's Report I have taken over from John Keane as editor of this newsletter. I, and I'm sure all of the Club members, would like to thank John for all of his hard work in producing this newsletter over the past three years.

It is over 20 years since I last edited a newsletter, for a Land Rover club, and the technology involved has changed significantly. Not only do I have to master my new computer (not the best time to have changed my PC and to be learning Windows 7) but all my trusted programs have had to be replaced. Please forgive me if I have made any mistakes in this issue but I'm trying to learn new versions of WORD and Photoshop as well as the intricacies of creating PDF versions for the printer and the website.

Finally, please keep submitting articles and photographs to me (my contact details are given below). Without your help this newsletter will cease to be so interesting.

SUBMISSION OF MATERIAL

Contributions for the future issues of the Newsletter are warmly invited. Contributions can be in any man- or machine-readable form. Original material should be marked for return, if required. All material, including text and photographs, must be the submitter's own work or the copyright holder must have given written permission for publication. Submission of material implies conformance to this. Submission also implies agreement that materials may be reproduced in relevant other Model Engineering and Railway publications.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Here we are in 2010 with my first update about the projects we are hoping to undertake this year.

During the Santa Special I was informed by Peter Woodruff that Dick had gifted the "Donk" and the Aristocrat carriages to the Club and had no objection to us disposing of the former. We are proposing to sell the "Donk" back to the Engineers Emporium and put the money towards a Class 20 Electric loco for which we have placed an order. This will come in kit form ready for volunteers to assemble and paint. It will give us our first Club loco



Photo John Keane
The relocated Ticket Office, with platform extension being laid by Tim Caswell.

which is much needed should we run out of steam, and can also be used for driver training.

At the same time we are starting work on the steaming bay concrete slab followed by the fabrication of the steelwork, all to be finished by September ready for the Polly Rally that we are hosting. Then there is the continuing development of the vacuum brakes for the coaches and the reconfiguration of station area.

So as you can see we have a very full workload ahead of us which can only but enhance the railway for all of us to enjoy. The committee welcomes all the help we can muster to achieve these projects.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

With the season now at an end it is time to start planning for the coming year. All of the dates available for birthdays have been booked and we have invited a number of clubs in the area to an open day in June. September will see us hosting the Polly Owners Group rally which hopefully will raise the profile of the club.

To build on our recent success it is important for us to continue to develop the site and the Chief Engineer has written about the revised plans for extending the steaming bays. I have been in correspondence with two companies to obtain plans and costing for a new station with canopy. When we have received their quotations we intend to apply for a grant to assist with the funding.

On the downside, membership renewals are now due and at the time of writing this report only 19 members had renewed for the coming year. Membership is key to the success of the railway and I hope many more will have renewed by

the time this article is published, and of course we welcome new member Mitchell Wyatt with his 'Scamp' loco.

There have been a number of recent and planned changes to the committee. In December, John Keane stood down, after 3 years as Signal Officer. James Jarvis has agreed to join as a 'committee man' pending the AGM. We are delighted that Colin Gross has volunteered to edit the New Pinewood Express which we are confident will continue in safe hands.

We were grateful that Council Chairman, Mrs Seona Turtle stepped in to temporarily remove the ban on visitor parking in the Station Parade for the Santa Specials. Of course, the problem of parking in this area on normal running days remains and our experience of the two running days operated under this ban is that it is impossible to avoid chaotic parking throughout the site and on grass verges. These are problems we have managed to avoid in the past and we hope to persuade the Parish Council that it is in everybody's interest to take the pressure off parking generally by reverting to using the Station Parade on our running days as it operated so well for so many years.

Happy new year to you all and here's to another successful season.

CIVIL ENGINEERING REPORT



Photos John Keane

The snow caused a few problems for the railway with some fallen branches obstructing the track and one puncturing the carriage shed roof.

Work is continuing on the upgrade to the station platforms and the Ticket Office has been moved back to ease the pinch point on Platform one.

However progress on the platforms has slowed due to the recent bad weather.

We have not had a clear Wednesday since the Santa Specials. Thank goodness we are not doing any major track refurbishment this

winter, just spot replacement of rotting sleepers where required.

Agreement has now been reached on the final layout of the upgrade to the steaming bays. The existing layout has two long bays and three short 6ft bays. The revised layout, using the extra land to the west, will have three long bays and five 9ft bays, each of which can service a large 71/4" tender engine such as a King. A new departure road from the bays will be built at the west end of



Photo John Keane

David Simmonite and Paul Archer starting work on the shuttering for the concrete base for the extension to the steaming bays.

the layout using a hydraulic table and the existing exit using the swinging elevating ramp will be retained. The work will be phased to ensure that some bays will be available for use at all times. A larger scale working drawing is being drafted and a copy will be available in the chalet and at the AGM. Finally, the off season is a time for maintenance to keep everything up to scratch so please come along on Wednesdays or Sunday mornings to help - no particular skills are needed.

MECHANICAL ENGINEERING REPORT

As seen in the last newsletter the two new guards trucks are in use and proving to be very popular with the guards and due to their success the Committee has agreed to build two more. Derek Tully has completed the mechanicals and

Ray Grace has the bodies in hand. All these trucks have a mechanical brake, and will be fitted with a vacuum brake control for use with the vacuum braked passenger cars.

The decision to buy a new society loco is exciting news. The loco, a battery powered Class 20, is identical to the one owned by Ian Shanks that did sterling work on public running days until his recent move to Chesterfield. The new loco will have its own dedicated stabling point in the engine shed where suitable battery charging facilities will be installed.

SAFETY OFFICER'S REPORT

Now while we are in the closed season it is good to reflect on what has been an accident free year even though at times we were operating at full capacity.



Photo John Keane

Little Dave (Pritchard) in prone position having been 'trolleyed in' to drill into the carriage shed roof (repairing the hole caused by a falling branch during the snow.

This record is only achieved because members turn up to carry out the various tasks needed for safe operation. Having said that we always need more members to volunteer to help on running days which after all only occur once a month - none of the jobs are too onerous. Whilst mentioning members if any you know anyone who might be interested in joining please bring them along to have a look.

SIGNALLING REPORT

This year, the installation of a new signal beyond the level crossing, has seen the completion of all currently planned signal deployments. Track wiring for train detection is also fully completed with the long block 2, beyond the level crossing, now split in two. There are no further essential signals planned though there is the possibility of a low level repeater for gantry signal S3 to improve its visibility to drivers on the through line. There is still work to complete inside the signal box to complete the furnishing and to install the

planned mimic for which most of the components except the display and connections are in place.

The winter weather has delayed some outside work so that, at the time of writing, it is not certain whether the storage unit behind the signal box will be completed by the time you read this or will continue its slow progress. Work has continued on the new yard telephone and this should be in place by Easter. As I am standing down as Signal Engineer after 3 years, I hope I have left a system that will continue to be stable with very little maintenance and that, with the help of the full documentation in the chalet, should be maintainable well into the future.

We have seen the implementation of the first insulated dual-gauge point at Pinewood, confirming that there is no insurmountable obstacle to maintaining continuous train detection if we wish. My one regret in standing down is that it has not been possible to extend the train detection and fully automatic signalling to the bridge loop, because of its all-steel, non-insulated track construction. Ironically, this is the place where such signalling might be particularly beneficial. Alternative methods have been suggested and investigated but having considered the implications and with the experience of other miniature railways in mind it was decided that any of the serial systems suggested would be best avoided. (A document explaining the reasoning for that has been produced. Of course the next signal engineer may decide otherwise.)

In my last report as Signal Engineer I would like to mention how much the Society is indebted to John Brotherton who has implemented most of the new signal heads and signal relay boards, working from the initial designs and prototypes. These are examples of the hours of work that some members put in at home, out-of-sight and therefore not always immediately appreciated. John's relay boards routinely passed the test rig first time and have contributed to the 'first time' operation and reliability we have enjoyed. His rolling replacement of the track bonds has reduced problems with track bonding to no more than one or two per season, usually attributed to loose bolts or track disturbance rather than corrosion - comparing well with some other railways.

WEBSITE REPORT

The Website continues to attract much attention and is creating useful publicity; we are getting many requests via the website with regard to parties (at least four a week during 2009). The site had between 10,000 and 20,000 hits per month during 2009, with the highest being October when we had a monthly hit rate of 21,000. I am guessing this is due to the end of season and the adverts for the Santa specials.

I am still looking for people to do little write up and supply pictures of their engines for me to put on the website, and of course anything else that is useful to communicate to our public.

In 2009 our website (www.pinewoodrailway.co.uk) saw the launch of a "join mailing list" feature to enable members and also the public to get the latest news sent directly to them, and I am hoping to advertise this more during the 2010 running season as it is a useful method of communication.

We have also launched an e-mail service for all our members which we hope will reduce the large number of individual e-mail addresses used to contact club members. To subscribe please send an e-mail to pinewoodmembers@pinewoodrailway.co.uk with the subject line set to subscribe. A major advantage of this system is that if you change your e-mail address you need only re-subscribe to continue to receive Club communications without the Committee having to update your contact details. Please remember that the alias committee@pinewoodrailway.co.uk can be used to contact the entire committee members via one e-mail address.

SANTA SPECIALS 2009

We have again held our annual Santa Special event – in fact, it has become so



Photo Di Evans

One visitor entered fully into the spirit by coming as one of Santa's Pixie helpers. It was noticed that Santa had a considerable likeness to James Jarvis.

popular and expected that we might be lynched by the local population if we didn't.

Our earlier fears of the chaos that might have inflicted the tight schedule of trains – with named children booked on each train and presents prepared according to name, age and sex – were removed by the change of heart on the part of the Council to allow our visitors to

park on the square for this pre-arranged event. Our thanks to Council Chairman Mrs Seona Turtle for stepping in to resolve this problem.

This was the first Santa Special in recent years not supervised by Dick Woodruff, who members will know passed away at the beginning of the year. Diana Keane, still recovering from complications of a broken leg was also unavailable for toy sorting. Fortunately our enthusiastic Chairman, Keith Briault, stepped into the breach and, with Esme and some assistance from others took on the multiple tasks of toy buying and sorting for the trains in addition to his well established role of organising the pies and drinks. In this, as in many other things, our small Society depends very much on the efforts of relatively few members.

The event was successful as usual, aided by the enormous luck of no rain on either day.

The second day was fully pre-booked and only a few seats remained on some of the first day trains. We were, however, able to accommodate the modest number of visitors who turned up hopefully, or who only learned of our existence by happening to be on site for football or other events on the day – maintaining our record that no children had to be turned away disappointed.

RETURN OF PAUL'S C19

November 22nd saw the anticipated return of Paul Konig's C19 following its makeover at Andy Walton's workshop (*see issue 23*).

The improvements in many areas were easy to see – brakes that work, full repaint, a blower that works and, best of all, a new effortless performance on the track.



Photo John Ephithite

In the foreground, Andy and Lesley Walton, having just delivered the C19 following its makeover.

There was a brief moment of dismay when Paul opened the regulator to start his first run – nothing happened in forward or reverse, with or without a good push.

After a few minutes deliberation the cause was traced to THAT PIN. The pin holding the rocker to its shaft for the left valve had come out. Andy hastened to say that it

was the only part of the engine he hadn't touched! It was easily found and soon replaced (with Loctite this time) and Paul enjoyed a trouble free few laps. Unfortunately, on its first outing during the first Santa Special day, another pin worked its way out of the, more difficult to access, insides valve gear. The day was completed with a bolt in place of the pin. During the following week, Derek Tully made replacement pins for all four locations on the inside gear with, unlike the originals, a proper flat to receive the grub screw. We dare to hope that this may be the end of the long-running saga of the C19 pins.

A CLUB LOCO - Paul Konig

For some time now we, as a Society, have been discussing the case for acquiring a club loco. A 'standby' loco, stored on-site, that can be used at short notice in the event of unavailability/failure of locos or when we are running at



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maximum capacity. A loco that could be used not only during public running but also on our members days, by our junior members, and for training purposes. The value of such a loco has never been in doubt, but we have simply not been in an appropriate financial position to make such an investment feasible. We have all worked hard, particularly over the past four years, to manage our levels of income and expenditure with a view to developing a fund for larger projects – a club loco being one of our stated aims.

I would not be writing this article were it not for the generous donation from the Woodruff family of the Lister Auto-Trolley (or "Dick's Donk" as it was affectionately know) to the Society. Following discussions with Peter and Pam, we have decided to sell the engine, the funds from which will finally

enable us to invest in a club loco. Given this substantial contribution, we are to name the loco in remembrance of Dick, it should be a fitting tribute to our Chairman who passed away suddenly one year ago.

Undertaking some market research I discovered that purchasing a robust, powerful loco is an expensive activity. Most suppliers start around £5,000 and above for unpainted electric loco kits, without batteries. Your committee have reviewed the available options and have now placed an order for a Class 20 (as per Ian Shank's electric loco). The loco was selected on the basis of its proven haulage capacity, ease of driving, overall dimensions, and value for money. It will come with up-rated motors (2 off 0.75kW motors compared to 4 off 250kW) providing 1.5kW of available power, with a suitable hand-hell controller and dynamic braking.

The loco is being purchased from Model Engineering Products Bexhill (<http://www.model-engineering.co.uk>) where Robin Neighbour has been most helpful, responding swiftly and informatively to numerous barrages of questions from me regarding suitability and specifications of various elements. The loco kit is due to be ready for collection in early March and construction will then commence.

Battery selection will be confirmed following completion of construction when we will fully understand available space. We also intend to adapt the wiring such that the batteries can be charged without requiring removal from the loco.

We are proposing to finish the loco in early BR green livery, close to our own corporate colours, plus we felt Dick might not approve of the more garish liveries the locos have subsequently carried!

We are looking for volunteers to help with the construction and finishing of the loco, if you would like to help, please contact the committee.

In order to acknowledge both the financial gift from his family, and his invaluable contributions to the Society it seems wholly appropriate that we name the loco after Dick.

The following names form the shortlist:

1. R M Woodruff
2. Dick Woodruff
3. Greyhound (the name carried by Dick's Traction Engine)

Your thoughts or suggestions would be welcomed. Several Class 20s were named and the 'plates for ours will be made by Diane Carney in nickel silver with black backing, as per prototype. We hope to hold a naming/dedication ceremony at this year's 'Members Day'.

Should you wish to find out anything further regarding the loco, or to express an interest in becoming involved in its construction and/or maintenance, please contact any member of the committee, or me (Paul Konig) directly.

ALLY PALLY EXHIBITION 2010- John Keane

A number of our members visited the London Model Engineering Exhibition at Alexandra Palace. On the Saturday, at least, the show seemed well supported with the queue for tickets snaking through the entire area set aside for it in the entrance hall and the car park was very nearly full by 11.00 a.m.



Photo John Keane

A comfortably full exhibition hall at Alexandra Palace

A feature of model engineering exhibitions in recent years is the presence of the smaller gauges - Gauge 1 (1/32 and 10 mm scale on 45 mm track), garden scale (also on 45 mm track) and 16 mm scale (on 32 mm track). All were represented by working layouts. Also present at this exhibition was a working steam layout representing the "16 mm Garratt Owners and Operators Association", formed in 2002. Though not new, these smaller scales appear to be growing in popularity; the 16 mm Association, for example, is reported to be signing up new members at a rate of one per day.

Evidently recognising where the growth area is and in the face of slow recruitment to the larger gauges, it is not surprising that a number of model engineering societies are adding 32 and 45 mm track facilities at their sites. As usual, the 7.1/4" Gauge Society had a display, an interesting item being the 0-4-0 coffee pot locomotive *Jennifer*.

This is a very hefty machine with a beam of about 27 inches and cylinders of about 3 inches diameter.

The boiler and engine are from a boat and connected by chain drive and rods to the four driving wheels. With its large cylinders it has the look of a powerful passenger hauler but I was unable to discover whether it suffers from the lack of steam generating ability that is reported to afflict similar locomotives with vertical boilers. The

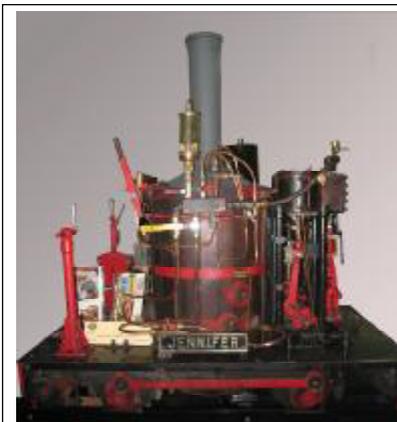


Photo John Keane

Jennifer, built by Robert Millard and now owned by Colin and Lisa Healy

locomotive operates from time to time at Hollycombe and other railways.



Photo John Keane

Central heating valves much in evidence on the controls for Jennifer.

there are only a few new engineering models each year and these are on Society stands. With so many people buying tools and machinery at the show, where are the models they are producing? It's still a great place to shop, but I miss those days when it was a true Model Engineering Exhibition.

Editor's Comment

I first attended the exhibition when it was at the Seymour Hall and stayed with the exhibition throughout its time at Wembley, normally operating model boats / submarines and acting as pool controller on behalf of the organisers. Back then the show often spanned 10 days and there were so many engineering entries that every day I found new models to examine. Now

THE GREAT LAXEY MINE RAILWAY

John Keane has supplied this sequel to the Travellers' tale in issue 23.

The two replicas of the locomotives Ant and Bee, which entered service on the newly restored railway as recently as 2004, have given the Laxey and Lonan Heritage Trust considerable trouble through the 2009 season.

Bee had already been largely rebuilt during the previous winter and modifications made to the engine's blower and safety valve. However, during the 2009 season it was found that the rubber suspension blocks had deteriorated which required, once again, removal of the boiler.

Both engines were steamed for the August Heritage Railway Festival but on the second journey of the day, a boiler tube failed in Ant. This engine was taken out of service and the faulty tube sealed. But during August a further four tubes failed. This after only five seasons of non-continuous operation!

It had been known for some time that the boiler inspector had not been entirely happy with the internal welding of the boilers. After removal of one of Ant's boiler tubes it was possible to carry out an internal examination with an endoscope.

This revealed that the welding was indeed inferior. With this finding on Ant, and suspecting that Bee's boiler might be similar, it was decided to down rate the working pressure on Bee even though Bee had passed its hydraulic and steam tests.

Towards the end of the season, with both steam engines out of action, the railway was operated by a 1.1/3 ton battery electric locomotive which had fortunately



Photo Andrew Scarffe, Laxey and Lonan Heritage Trust.

Preparing to remove B's boiler and showing the wooden insulation under the cladding.

been bought earlier in the year and re-gauged to the unique (in Britain) 19" gauge.

The railway directors have taken the decision to purchase two new boilers. Not surprisingly, *"The directors of the railway are to pursue the matter with the engine's builders."*

DIARY DATES 2010

External events are in **bold** text. Please check dates before travelling.

DATE		EVENT
MARCH	Thursday 11th	AGM
APRIL	Sunday 4th	EASTER Public running, 13.30-16.00
	Saturday 17th - Sunday 18th	SW Model Engineering, Model Making and Hobbies Show (Royal Bath and West Show Ground)
	Sunday 18th	Birthday Party, 11.00-13.00 Public Running, 13.30-16.00
MAY	Monday 3rd	Yately May Fayre (provisional)
	Sunday 9th	Invited clubs & members' running (provisional)
	Sunday 16th	Birthday Party, 11.00-13.00 Public Running, 13.30-16.00
JUNE	Sunday 6th	Family Day (members' running), 10.00-16.00
	Sunday 20th	Birthday Party, 11.00-13.00 Public Running, 13.30-16.00
JULY	Sunday 4th	Members' Running, 10.00-16.00
	Saturday 10th - Sunday 11th	Guildford Model Steam rally & Exhibition
	Sunday 18th	Birthday Party, 11.00-13.00 Public Running, 13.30-16.00
AUGUST	Sunday 1st	Members' Running, 10.00-16.00
	Sunday 15th	Birthday Party, 11.00-13.00 Public Running, 13.30-16.00
SEPTEMBER	Saturday 4th	Polly Rally at Pinewood Railway
	Sunday 5th	Members' Running, 10.00-16.00
	Sunday 19th	Birthday Party, 11.00-13.00 Public Running, 13.30-16.00
OCTOBER	Sunday 3rd	Members' Running, 10.00-16.00
	Friday 15th - Tuesday 19th	Midlands Model Engineering Exhibition (Warwickshire Exhibition Centre)
	Sunday 17th	Birthday Party, 11.00-13.00 Public Running, 13.30-16.00
DECEMBER	Sunday 5 th & 12th	Santa Specials (provisional dates)