



WIRRAL MODEL ENGINEERING SOCIETY

www.wirralmodelengineeringsociety.co.uk

Newsletter February 2018

Dear Member,

Thanks to all members and friends for the time and effort given to the Santa Specials. The event was fully booked by October 1st and despite the weather we received over the four operating days just about everyone who had booked turned up! A visit to the event by the Mayor of Wirral was a lighthearted and fun event for her and her family and her letter of thanks was a pleasure to receive. As were all the comments from our visitors who seemed to appreciate what we provided for them.

Despite petitions and objections by the public, parking charges have been introduced at Royden Park. The Society has been asked to keep the top boom gate clipped closed after passing through. Thank you in anticipation for helping with this.

The raised track is now fully back in use and is being used between November and Easter! Long may this continue as it is such a favourite facility in the Park.

Given all the activity and progress of the past months it is a pity that members do not feel able to come forward and help with the Society programme. Whilst some talks are being organised for Thornton Hough meetings nothing has been arranged for Royden Park. Requests for ideas and suggestions seem to regularly fall on deaf ears! Wednesdays are currently well supported at the Park when all those jobs that need doing can be done. Help with keeping the buildings and contents in good order are always appreciated. However, with mud laden shoes regularly in the kitchen a quick brush around would not go amiss after prolonged lunches and help reduce the load on 'those who do' try to keep the place clean and tidy.

A tree has fallen in the walled garden behind our kitchen wall and will be felled in due course. This may cause some restriction on access if the demolition includes a working day. However, it may reduce the debris on the roof and, if someone cleans them, help to keep the gutters clean. Any volunteers?

Contents:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1. Santa Specials 2017 | 6. Future events |
| 2. Membership renewal | 7. Boiler certificates |
| 3. Access to the sidings | 8. Parking meters |
| 4. The society website | 9. Appendix 1 Synopsis of committee meeting |
| 5. Diary 2018/19 | 10. Appendix 2 Buyer Beware! |

1. Santa Specials 2017

The event was very successful despite some very wet conditions. Were we downhearted? – No of course not! The smiling faces and profuse thanks of our visitors uplifted us all! A very big vote of thanks is due to all our members who assisted in any way and also to those friends who graced the Grotto. The Society has received many congratulatory messages of appreciation for the whole Santa set-up and our perseverance in very wet conditions. Well done all!

2. Membership renewal

Membership renewals for 2018 are invited. Thank you if you have already renewed. Renewal forms are available at the Sidings or by downloading one from the Society website. Please complete the form and return it to the membership secretary who will then issue a membership card. The fee is £25.00 cash or cheque payable to WMES. If you know of anyone interested in joining the Society please ensure they have information and an application form! Family members are always welcome; please enter their names on the form.

Important note:

Would members please let the Secretary or the Membership Secretary know if any of their details change e.g. address, Email contact information or 'phone number. The membership secretary, Bob Spencer, can be contacted on 0151 342 3570. Our secretary's address is: 43 Colemere Drive, Thingwall, Wirral CH61 7XT

3. Access to the Sidings.

Further to the request made in the previous Newsletter, if any member finds that they no longer require a key and key fob the Society would be pleased to receive them back. A refund will of course be made. It is still noticeable how few members actually open or lock the premises up even on a casual basis.

Members wishing to access the facilities can arrange for a loan key set on application. At present this facility is very limited due to the high number of unused key sets already with the members.

Housekeeping – thank you for keeping the facilities at The Sidings clean and tidy. Also, if Society property is damaged in use, or found damaged, please make it known to a committee member so that repair or removal from service can be arranged.

4. The Society website

Thanks to Alan Banks the website continues to provide information on the Society. Articles and photographs are always required to keep the site updated and the Webmaster would be pleased to receive material suitable for the site. Please help with this task, contact the secretary in the first instance to arrange input.

5. Diary 2018/9

The Society is always interested in obtaining speakers and topics of interest for meetings. If you know of any contacts that would be willing to give a talk or presentation please inform the Secretary or a committee member in the first instance. The program runs from June each year, following the AGM. Our thanks to those members who have arranged the diary for us. It is appreciated.

February 15th Discussion Evening.

March 1st Discussion Evening. **15th** Quiz Night. **25th** BST begins.

April 5th Discussion Evening. 19th John Ryan ‘Merseyrail Extension Loop & Link Line’.
May 3rd Discussion Evening. 17th Annual General Meeting.

6. Future events and social programme

Only one suggestion has been received regarding a Society activity. Other than that no other proposals or suggestions for society events have been received.

DONCASTER – National Model Engineering & Modelling Exhibition

Saturday 12th May.

Alan Pennell (0151 648 6588) is prepared to arrange this visit if sufficient support is evidenced no later than 31st March, with a Deposit of £28. This deposit covers coach cost and admittance to Exhibition. Usual arrangements - 8am departure from Hooton Station arriving back circa. 7.30pm.

Please note this visit is open to non-members – so bring your friends/neighbours to fill up the coach and keep the seat price down. For Exhibition details see:

www.thedoncastershow.com

7. BOILER CERTIFICATES

Please remember, if you sell or scrap, a boiler-equipped item that has been registered/certificated (whether current or not) by WMES, to inform our Secretary John Meadows 0151 648 2967 to enable WMES records to be updated.

The Society has received a document from NAME entitled ‘Buyer Beware’. This is included in Appendix 2.

8. PARKING METERS

These are now operational in Royden Park. The charge is: £0.50 for 1 hour, £1.00 for 2 hours and £2.00 for the day. An annual permit can be obtained for £50.00.

9. Appendix 1

Synopsis of Committee Meetings.

The proposed Meeting for 7th June was deferred, due to holiday absences, and was held on

20th September. Matters arising from the Minutes – the new 5-year Licence has been received. Ground Level station rebuild now completed. New seats and cushions have been purchased and installed at both stations, plaque wording to be agreed. New First Aid box awaited. Officers Appointed – Chairman post vacant; Company Secretary J. Meadows; Treasurer F. Stephen; Minute Secretaries K & C. Chynoweth; Membership R. Spencer; Raised Track J. Meadows & K. Chynoweth; Ground Track F. Stephen; Premises I. Eccles; Programme Organiser B. Harrison; Publicity A. Pennell; Webmaster A. Banks; Newsletter Editor post vacant.

Secretary’s Correspondence – E-mail from Mayor proposing WMES for Queens Award for Voluntary Service. Application sent in 15th Sept., a response may be made by May 2018. Treasurer’s Report – accounts circulated and after clarification were approved. Membership – new members Ashley Newton, Roger Dehany and Sara Blackburn. Forms for New Applications and Renewals combined into one form. Risk Assessments/Society Records – up to date. Raised Track Report – more steel requested for some modifications, costs approved. Those operating on the raised track are pleased with the improved facilities. A video had been taken by passengers on the trains, committee felt that while the content was good the title of the raised track sequence was inappropriate. Ground Level Report – a manual system to operate the signals and points is being put together. This will be integrated with the automatic

system to enable use of either system. One third of new steel for track improvements has been delivered. Site Inspection Progress – GL station has been upgraded, thanks to all who assisted. Kitchen tidiness has improved. Any failed items e.g. extension leads, hand operated machinery, tools, etc. should be reported to committee to help with safety and maintenance. Premises/Security Report – condition of premises is satisfactory. One key fob has been returned to Project group. Programme/Future Events – the Branch Line Society propose a visit on 18th November. Following a clash of events involving a member's private function and the Stephenson Locomotive Society, which was subsequently cancelled, members must ensure that Barry Harrison is aware of proposals for private functions. Mr Spencer requested a function for 14th October. Santa's arrangements would be similar to last year, update details available by e-mail. Booking commences on Sunday 1st October. Website – has been considerably updated, many thanks to Alan Banks who is always willing to receive information. Procedures at the Cessation of Running – Shunting of empty carriage stock may not take place until public running has finished and public have left the site. These procedures and railway operations will be reviewed. Committee were asked to read Society information on their 'flash sticks' with a view to updating the content as the railway evolves. Thanks were given to Mr Stephen and Mr Jones for the efforts they have put into organising the signalling systems. A.O.B. – a letter will be sent to the Mayor thanking her for her efforts in setting up the recommendation that we receive the Queens Award. **Date of Next Meeting - 22nd November 2017.**

Meeting on **22nd November 2017.** Matters Arising – seat plaques purchased and fitted. New First Aid box installed. Thank you letter sent to Mayor re. Queens Award. The BLS visit did not happen. Secretary's Correspondence – reply received from Mayor re. Santa invitation. We have been contacted about an Assessment date for the Queens Award. Treasurer's Report – after circulation the accounts were approved. Approval requested and granted to purchase an air compressor for the manual signalling system. The gratuities were approved. A proper charging facility is required for charging batteries. Membership – There are no new members. Risk Assessments/Society Records – assessments to be updated at year end and 'sticks' updated at next meeting. Society records up to date. Raised Track Report – new track section fitted, tested, and operation approved. Weather permitting it is hoped to run on the Santa days. Ground Level Track Report – weekly progress reports are made on progress of the manual signalling system. All new steel now received/stored for track upgrade, plastic sleepers to be ordered in the New Year. Site Inspection Report – nothing to report. PAT testing has been completed. The workshop is not the place for members to dump non-PAT tested redundant electrical items 'in case they may be useful in the future'. Premises/Security – redundant items in the workshop are being cleared out for safety reasons and also in preparation for Santa operations. Programme/Future Events – Barry Harrison has published the Programme up to the AGM and currently arranging speakers for Thornton Hough, for which he is thanked. One suggestion only had been received from a member for the 2018 Programme. Requests, suggestions or offers for meetings are solicited, if none are forthcoming next year's programme will look blank. Arrangements for Santa are well in hand. Website – webmaster is doing a good job but information is urgently needed from the membership. It is proposed to issue a Newsletter early in the new year. A.O.B. – a list of key dates has been circulated. Broken or damaged items must be reported to the committee. **Date of next Meeting - 24th January 2018.**

Brief Notes of Meeting held on **24th January 2018** (unconfirmed).

Secretary's Correspondence – letter received from the Mayor saying how much they had enjoyed their visit to Santa and thanking the Society for the donation to the Mayor's charity. NAME report received listing various claims that had been made, some arising from accidents occurring when no members of the society had been present. We must ensure that all moveable equipment is left in a safe condition when leaving the site. Letter received advising caution when buying second-hand equipment and problems that may arise. The list of hydraulic boiler certificates has been lodged with NAME. Treasurer's Report – the profit & loss balance sheets were circulated. The yearly accounts would be presented for approval at the next meeting. The expense of the ground level signals was queried, this was resolved by the treasurer. Membership Report – There are no new members. Subs. for 2018 are due from February 1st at £25. Risk Assessments/Society Records – these have been reviewed and will be up-dated by the end of January. Raised Track – is open and available for use. Work done has been recorded and signed off. The approved member and driver sheet and the day sheet have been updated. The keys used for the padlocks are easily bent. Members are asked to ensure that the key is pushed firmly home before turning. The current padlocks need servicing. It is reported that the track now runs very smoothly and is very stable. Ground Level Report – operational reports are produced weekly. Battery chargers need servicing and batteries replaced as necessary. A survey of frost precautions for the site external water user points needs to be carried out to ensure the system is properly drained down. Concern has been expressed about carrying dogs on the train and they are a potential for accidents to occur. It was agreed that only dogs deemed to be under proper control would be carried. Site Inspection Report – nothing to report other than a tree in the walled garden leaning against our building requires to be removed. Premises and Security – a review of keyholders is needed to allow for a spare set of keys that could be issued on loan to members requiring occasional access. Programme/Future Events – the current Programme runs through to the AGM. Barry Harrison has agreed to do the next 12 months diary. It was suggested that we should organise some club visits such as Leeds Armoury, Hornby Museum at Maghull and the Lifeboat at Hoylake. The Santa Specials were very successful and several very appreciative comments had been received. There was no social programme due to lack of interest.

Web/Newsletter – the web will be updated and a Newsletter is imminent. Any Other Business – more coal will be needed shortly, some dealers approached can only deliver a ton on pallets which is not convenient. A request had been received from a 15-year old junior member of MMRS to join the Society. It was agreed we could not take juniors under 16 and then parental supervision would be necessary. Clatterbridge Hospital are running a 'Go Green for Cancer' campaign. It was suggested that all donations on 4th or 11th February would be donated to the campaign. **Next Meeting 22nd February 2018.**

10. Appendix 2 BUYER BEWARE!

Buying a second hand steam locomotive (road or rail) can be a very exciting time for the purchaser. From time to time we hear of a newcomer to the hobby buying a locomotive then looking around for somewhere to run it. Asking to join a local model engineering club is the solution however, it is not unknown for a club, presented by a

stranger with his locomotive, to be wary because the locomotive looks to be in need of much TLC (whilst clubs can be very welcoming of new members, fixing a worn out locomotive for the newcomer may be beyond the club's resources). There is also the possibility that in the case of a railway locomotive it may be unsuitable for the track at the club. Thus it would have been wiser for the newcomer to join a club first then get advice on what to buy.

Locomotives can be bought from a second-hand trader or from another member of the hobby fraternity. In either case the locomotive should preferably be supplied with its "full service history", in other words all its test certificates from the day it was made. Unfortunately this is not always the case thus the purchaser should be very careful about paying any money before the locomotive has been examined and preferably been given a boiler hydraulic test, which if satisfactory, should be followed by a steam test. The Orange Book* (The Examination & Testing of Miniature Steam Boilers – Revised Edition 2018) gives the current guidelines accepted by the Hobby. If the seller is a trader then that trader cannot use the examination certificates supplied by the Hobby. A good way forward is to persuade ones own club boiler inspector to accompany the member in checking a locomotive is worth the asking price. The inspector could also test the boiler and issue a certificate from his home club.

Buying a new boiler or locomotive from a commercial maker is a little different. In general all commercial boilers made since 2002 should be CE marked and accompanied with the necessary CE paperwork (the commercial maker should be CE accredited also and thus allowed to issue CE paperwork). Such a boiler will almost certainly have been given a 'shell test' and a commercial certificate issued. This certificate is acceptable to the Hobby. If a hydraulic test at 1.5x Working Pressure has been done and a commercial certificate issued then it must be realised that the boiler cannot be given a club annual steam test, during the period the commercial hydraulic 1.5xWP test is still in date. This is because it is not permissible to mix commercial certificates with club issued ones. There are two ways out of this dilemma, (1) have the boiler steam tested commercially until the commercial hydraulic certificate expires (possibly an expensive procedure) or (2) on receipt of the boiler from the manufacturer forget the commercial 1.5xWP certificate and start testing within the club (the commercial shell test certificate is still valid).

Buying a locomotive or just a boiler that is being sold without any paperwork is a chancy business. If it is a second-hand boiler, does it have an identity stamped on it – look on the backhead, foundation ring area or even on the dome boiler bush. If there is such an identity then an enquiry re. this identity could be made to either the Northern Association of Model Engineers or the Southern Federation of Model Engineering Societies – they may be able to tell if the boiler has ever been registered with them.

Summarising, assure yourself any paperwork supplied is genuine and valid. Do the details on the certificates match the boiler? Have all the details been entered on the certificates? If the details on the certificates are not complete or wrong but the boiler looks to be worth buying then paying a small deposit may be the way to show you are a serious purchaser whilst you make further enquiries as necessary about the seller, paperwork etc. Unless you know the seller from your own experience the best advice is CAVEAT EMPTOR.

* The orange cover version of the boiler test code is due to be published soon. It will replace the green cover version.