

# TIVVY BUMPER

The newsletter of the Tiverton & District  
Model Engineering Society

Spring 2015



## Editorial

Welcome to the first edition of 'Tivvy Bumper' for 2015.

On the left, you will see the last six 'Pictures of the Month' from our web site. You may not know, but all the previous 'Pictures of the Month' are available on the web site. Just follow the link at the bottom of the 'Home' page.

Remember that the club web site has all the latest information about the society, dates of meetings and presentations, steam-up days, as well as a bulletin board where members can share experiences, share information about events, etc. So if you have access to the Internet (or someone in your family does), have a look.

The web site address is: <http://www.tivertonmodelengineering.org.uk/>

On the front cover of this edition, you will see secretary John's VDH, which he acquired with his new lathe, and showed at last October's 'Bits & Pieces' evening; Bob driving Ed's "Ajax" at the November evening steam-up; Simon behind Mike's electric engine; part of the club stand at the Matford Centre exhibition; Bob's 'Maisie' - regularly seen on our track, and the governor for Chris's 1 1/2" Alchin "Royal Chester", which he brought along to our 'Bits & Pieces' evening in March.

We are always on the look out for photographs to feature on our web site, as well as articles for the newsletter - so please contact any of the committee if you have anything suitable.

In this edition, as well as the regular pieces, you will find a report on the club's visit to the South Devon Railway last October, and news about traction engines in our club.

Steve

## Chairman's Chatter

First, a big welcome to our new members who have joined us in the past year.

I am writing this on the first day of spring, after we advanced the clocks by an hour and now looking forward to warm summer days at Worthy Moor. Our AGM was few days ago and I would like to get my grouse out of the way now. The meeting was very positive but only attended by 15 members. This is a chance for members to air their views and I would have liked to have seen a larger attendance. I hope we can do better next year.

Having got that out of the way, I feel that the last year has been a very good one for the club. I am particularly pleased that we participated in events that raised the profile of the club. These events include; The Tiverton Festival in the pannier market; Coldharbour Mill; The Clum Valley Model Railway Show and The Exeter Garden Railway show. For the latter we had to obtain additional tables to accommodate the large number of our exhibits provided by our members.

We have also been busy with other club activities such as the Open Day (just a shame it rained again) and summer BBQ, many thanks to member's wives and partners who provided a wonderful buffet spread. We had visits to John Boyd Textiles, and the South Devon Railway. The Christmas dinner was again well attended as were the winter talks by Helen Verrall on Boilers (Western Steam), Amyas Crump who gave a fascinating talk on railways in this area, and our own Steve and John giving a talk on the Enigma Machine and Bletchley Park and finally Steve (again) giving a talk on Morgan cars. I had no idea they used so much wood in the construction of these.

Worthy Moor is a wonderful facility in a beautiful location and thanks to those members who look after this so well. Sadly our neighbours

were not happy with our hedge maintenance, but you can't please everyone.

The first of the month running days are very well attended even in the winter and there is always a great atmosphere. I must express my thanks to Andy Dower's wife, Mandy, who very thoughtfully supplied some very welcoming hot soup on a very cold February day. Whilst on the subject of food, thanks also to Mary Vigers for the constant supply of biscuits, especially the ginger nuts - very moorish!

We are considering extending the carriage shed, as it is getting somewhat congested with trolleys being stacked vertically. Any thoughts? I wonder if we should hold one or two weekend "maintenance" days to give those members who still have to work for a living the chance to help? Don't forget we have a forum on the web site where topics such as these can be discussed.

Let's hope for some good weather this year for our Open Day. The Model Engineer magazine has already published details of this on their web site. Additionally we have been mentioned (with some photographs) in some recent editions of the magazine (in the club diary section) further raising the profile of our club. I must state now, I did not take the photographs, despite receiving the credit.

There have been a couple of pieces of bad news. We were all very saddened to hear that Bob, Nigel's father, passed away recently. Bob and Nigel were both members, and we extend our condolences to the family. We also heard that Brian, a friend of the club, sadly passed away in the winter. Brian helped the club in countless ways, including engraving our name badges and donating large coils of multi-core cable used for the signals. Having seen his workshop, the words "Aladdin's Cave" comes to mind, you name it he had it – in triplicate! A real character and true gentleman who will be sadly missed.

I don't know how many of you are aware that I am building a Simplex, frequently called a "Complex" for very good reasons. I have now got to the stage where I have got it running on compressed air. It seems to run well, but know the valve setting will need lots of tweaking. Fortunately the club has a great depth of experience and I am getting much welcomed and valued advice. I am about to start construction of a revolving loco cradle, as the Simplex is getting somewhat heavy to move. This will be able to accommodate locos of varying lengths and again I give my thanks to members for their advice.

That's about it for now.

Adrian

### **Treasurer's Musings**

At the AGM I was able to report another satisfactory year with my Treasurers hat on. There was a paper loss of £64, but that was caused by a depreciation charge of £242 which is only a paper entry, so cash rose a bit. I recommended, and the Meeting approved the same subscription rates for 2015/2016 as 2014/2015 – i.e. £28.00 for full members and £25.50 for Country members i.e. those living more than 30 miles away from the track. Junior members stay at £1.

Subs are now due so please could you send me a cheque for £28, payable to Tiverton & District MES Ltd at your earliest convenience (or pass the subs to me on a Friday or steam up Saturday), I will then send you or give to you your new membership card.

We are attracting a few new members at present which all helps the finances.

North Devon District Council have again confirmed this year that we are granted a 100 % discount on Rates so nothing to pay there! However as the rebate comes from a pot from Central Government there

is no certainty that it will always be the case and if it dries up then we will have to pay a small amount of rates. If that happens I will have to review subscription rates at the following AGM to take account of whatever the charge is.

Chris

### **Secretary's Scribblings**

Sometimes it pays to have an obsession! For years I have wanted to see an actual train running on the track at Worthy Moor - that is, with several riding cars hitched to a locomotive, each one full of people. At the April Saturday steam-up, my wish was finally granted.

Thanks to member Andy's powerful diesel/electric locomotive, we were able to couple three riding cars each with four passengers, and the loco made light work of hauling this load. Provided the engine was given its head on the uphill part of the run, it managed to pull without wheel spin.

Running such a train had a further bonus: towards mid-afternoon. I spotted a group of children looking through the main gate. It turned out that all the children were pupils at Rackenford School, and every one of them had visited the track three years ago. This visit had been part of a school project on Transport. That day had been memorable for giving all the children a soaking, and that after weeks of dry weather. I invited them in, along with a couple of mothers. This Saturday, being warm and dry, was perfect running weather. All the children and the two mothers took no persuading to ride the track.

Such was the enjoyment that I was able to plant the idea that children in double figures of age could consider joining the club at junior rates. A couple of children brightened up at that idea, and we suspect that some Rackenford dads might be combing eBay for a little electric engine!

John.

## South Devon Railway visit

On Saturday October 25<sup>th</sup> 2014, a group of 17 enjoyed a workshop tour and subsequent ride on the train at the South Devon Railway.

The day started with a briefing from Richard Elliot (the first General Manager of the railway, now retired), who explained that the workshops were set up to service the equipment of the railway, but also undertake contract work for other Heritage Railways and mainline Train Operating Companies - from which they make a tidy profit.



The majority of their contract work is on wheel-sets, and we saw this pair, mounted between centres, for turning the wheel tread.



This picture shows a row of them in the workshop. The second pair from the left are for 82045, the new Class 3 tank engine being built at Bridgenorth. There were many more wheel-sets outside!



boiler shop was the boiler (shown left) for 6412, a GWR pannier tank that they are re-building.



After examining all the machinery in the workshop, including a fascinating 'quartering machine', we moved on to the boiler shop. SDR bought the business (and equipment) of Roger Pridham, and they have the ability to build a complete boiler. In the

We were also shown their press that they use for shaping boiler plates, and we were told that when they set up to press a plate, they always press at least 2. A second, in case they make a mistake with the first one, but often a third which can be sold later. We saw several examples of back-heads in the yard outside, one of which is shown here.

We also saw all the dies for making the plates.

After lunch, the visit was rounded off with a ride to Totnes and back, alongside the beautiful River Dart, behind GWR pannier tank 5786, albeit currently sporting London Transport livery, and numbered L92.

### **Track Trivia**

The November steam-up was extended to include night running and a bonfire. A number of members and locos appeared, including Ed and his 'Ajax', Bob and 'Maisie', Andy and 'Highlan Lassie', Steve and 'Rob Roy', Mike and his electric engine. On the cover you will see the picture Chris took of Bob driving Ed's loco, complete with headlights, with Graham as passenger.

The December steam-up was blessed with wonderful sunny weather and as a result there was a really good turn-out. Bob had his 'Maisie', Andy turned up with a little 0-4-0 saddle tank. He also had his Class 37 electric engine, and Tim and Mike had their electric engines. Steve was there with his 'Rob Roy', and Vic had his 'Polly'. A really good turn-out.

The January steam-up was a very dismal affair, with persistent drizzle all day. A number of members turned up, and Vic braved the weather and steamed his 'Polly' - a couple of members even riding behind him.

The February steam-up was a much better day, and was very well attended. Bob had his 'Maisie', as did Andy, along with a 'Mabel'. Steve had his 'Rob Roy', Vic had his 'Polly', Mike steamed his 14xx, and Tim had his electric tram.

The 7th March turned out to be a fabulous Spring day. Over 20 members, family and friends turned up at the track - but only a few engines. Tim and Adrian both had their electric engines, Andy had his 'Maisie' and Steve had his 'Rob Roy'. A good time was had by all.

The April steam-up day was also blessed with good weather, and there were plenty of members and friends in attendance, although, once again,

very few engines. Tim had his electric tram, and Andy brought his class 37. This entertained us all by coupling up several trolleys and pulling quite a decent load. (See next month's "Picture of the Month" to see what I mean). Steve had his 'Rob Roy', but due to blower problems, was unable to steam.

### **Traction Engine News**

In the last few years, two of our members have completed the long-term projects of building their traction engines.

Richard Kellaway has built two 4" scale McLaren Road locomotives, and Bob Evenett has built a 3" scale Fowler General Purpose Traction Engine.

As we know, both of Richard's engines have been in steam for a few years, and have been rallied all over the south of England and Wales. He has on occasion even steamed his engine from his home to a rally (a distance of more than twenty miles).

Richard was awarded the cup for 'Best Engine in Show' at the Model Steam Road Vehicle Society rally at Tewkesbury, where there were sixty or seventy engines in attendance, most in steam.

2014 saw Bob Evenett's Fowler out on the rally field for the first time. (You may remember seeing the engine on our web site as "Picture of the Month" in August 2014..Ed) The engine was not quite finished, with wire rope for the winch, whistle and governor still to make - another twelve month's work! (Most has now been done). Bob's excuse was that his Grandsons couldn't wait another year to drive the engine.

Both members have been among recipients of the Victor Feeney Cup, awarded at our Club's annual barbeque.

The West of England Steam Engine Society holds a major rally at Stithians, Cornwall each year. There is a large section for miniature road steam vehicles, and around fifty engines attend each year. The Kernick Eley Trophy is awarded to the best miniature in show. In 2012 Richard received this award for his McLaren "Wallace", and in 2014 Bob received the award for his Fowler. These awards are presented to engines that not only look good, but have been in steam for the duration of the show, usually two to three days.

Here's to a successful 2015

### **Forthcoming events**

Don't forget that we meet on the first Saturday of every month at Worthy Moor for a steam-up (and chat). Please come along.

We also meet on Wednesdays to maintain our wonderful site. Please come along to that too.

Mark your diary for these events for the next 6 months:

#### **2015**

6th June	Open Day
16th October	Bits and Pieces
18th December	Christmas Dinner

We are hoping to arrange a visit to the Kensey Valley railway - a private 7 1/4" railway near Egloskerry. Probably in September, so keep an eye on the web site for details.