

STEAM



LINES

PUBLISHED BY THE NORTHERN DISTRICTS
MODEL ENGINEERING SOCIETY INC.

P.O. BOX 296
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xmas 1990

P R E S I D E N T S L E T T E R

Once again we are approaching the Festive Season and sadly this will be the last letter from me as President.

The last three years has been a rewarding experience, sometimes trying, sometimes exciting but never dull.

Progress has been made, due to the efforts of "The Few" at our Balcatta site. We are in sound position financially and we have gained new Members.

Come the annual general meeting in March you will need to elect a new President. (did I hear a sign of relief). I urge you, each and every one of you to ask yourselves "what part can I play in ensuring the future well being of this club?"

The ideal candidate for President will have three qualities:

1. The patience of Job
2. The wisdom of Solomon
3. The strength of Samson

I am sure all our model engineers have these qualities, which one of you will take it on?

All that remains is for me to wish you and yours a very Happy Christmas and a good New Year.

Regards

Bill

Hello once again, with the Christmas edition of Steamlines. I am certain that the more observant in our midst will have noted that there were only three issues this year. I suppose that this is really symptomatic of the poor response from the majority of our brethren to my previous requests for editorial material.

There are very few of our members who have consistently helped in this regard and I am grateful for their efforts, however it is unreasonable to expect this situation to continue. I have written the occasional piece as well, but this will not become the norm lest this newsletter be seen merely as a reflection of the Editors opinion.

I know that there are many interesting tales that could be included in these pages. Whether it be past work experiences or some aspect of workshop practice that could benefit others, it can all make good reading and help to fill the newsletter.

Fellow members, it's in your hands, if I don't receive, I can't print!

Front Page

The Eagle-eyed among us will no doubt have seen the larger format on page one of this issue. Actually, that was how the previous printing should have been, however my "subbie" miscued with the copier controls and produced a batch of reduced-image front pages before the error was noticed. Being good conservationists, it was decided to use the duplicates rather than despatch same to the bin. I hope he wears his glasses this time!

Notes from the Committee

Balcatta site continues to progress. The tunnel has been the centre of activity for some time now and is nearing completion. The roof is in place and earthworks almost finished. The steel security doors at either end are well under way. The tunnel portal design has been settled and these will be cast in a cement polystyrene sandwich, reputedly very strong and virtually maintenance free.

A large caravan has been obtained and placed on-site, the intention being to use same as a clubroom until such time as a more permanent structure is built. The usual home comforts will ultimately be supplied. The Committee will be using the caravan for monthly meetings as well.

The Stirling Council has approved a significant grant to our Society over a two year period. We will be matching the grant on a one for one basis to get the maximum benefit from this funding.

The Committee will be providing a 240L garbage bin for members use at Balcatta.

Maddington Plaza

N.D.M.E.S. was invited to exhibit wares during the week 8 - 13 October 1990.

The exhibition was staged along similar lines to previous events of this type, however there were several aspects that were somewhat disappointing and the Committee will be reviewing these matters before reporting to a general meeting.

One that I can comment upon is individual involvement. At a general meeting several years ago, our membership agreed that the plans for our site development would be costly. In order to achieve a reasonable rate of progress, it was decided that the Society should use Contract Labour, where possible and finance this approach by participating in commercial ventures such as shopping centre displays.

We have been very successful in this regard to date and the results can be seen at Balcatta.

The negative side of the story rests with the lack of support from some members when it comes time to set-up and be in attendance at these venues. President Bill was quite hard pressed during the weeks leading up to 8 - 13 October in obtaining sufficient support to stage the event. In fact we relied considerably upon three young lads to "hold the fort" when senior members were unavailable.

This apparent disinterest has been the basis of considerable anguish within the Committee and may well mean a review of current methods of achieving our goals.

Comedy Corner

A Priest, a Doctor and a Lawyer hired a boat to indulge in some fishing.

The weather became worse and the boat began to drift dangerously out to sea.

The Lawyer volunteered to swim ashore to get help, the Priest said a prayer for his safety and then the Lawyer jumped overboard and began to swim.

After a few minutes, the others were horrified to see a large White Pointer Shark moving rapidly towards him. Nearer and nearer it came, but then, at the last moment it veered off and swam away.

"It's a good job I said that prayer for him", remarked the Priest with relief.

"I don't think that had anything to do with it", said the Doctor. "I believe it was just professional courtesy!"

Workshop Topics

1) When mixing up small quantities of "Araldite" or similar epoxy resins, the metal (or plastic) cap sealing soft drink bottles, makes an ideal container which can be disposed of after use. Larger quantities can easily be handled in small aluminium pie dishes. Incidentally these make economical solvent baths for small items, when degreasing etc.

Wayward spills of liquid epoxy resin can be successfully cleansed by using white vinegar as a solvent. Its too late once it sets!

2) Swarfega, Protectoclean and other brands of workshop hand cleaners are useful for removing grease spots from clothes and other places where it should not be.

Interestingly we have had good success in removing teenage "graffiti" from brickwork with these products - be patient and persistent, it works - usually before the brick dissolves.

3) Storage of precision lathe equipment can be a problem particularly with rust prevention. I have had great success by spraying components with W.D.40 or similar and then enclosing same in plastic freezer bags. Evacuate the air in the usual way (borrow Mum's vacuum pump) - it doesn't taste too good the other way-and then seal off the bag with a wire tie. It seems to form a perfect vapour barrier and some of my gear has rested thus for in excess of 6 years with no apparent ill effects.

4) Precise location can be a problem when setting up work in the lathe. Try insulating the tool from the holder with a fiber sandwich and then tighten up.

If you have a multimeter, connect one cable to the work piece and the other to the tool. Precise contact then becomes immediately apparent.

A small battery and lamp circuit will do the job just as well as the multimeter.

Annual General Meeting

March, 1991 is the date and I take this opportunity to remind members that all Committee positions will be declared vacant. This is your chance to stand up, be counted and offer yourself for service. Please consider the matter carefully.

Voting rights at the A.G.M. are dependent upon member financial status. The subscription is currently \$35.00 and should be paid on or before the evening of the meeting.

Personality Parade - Len Young

Several weeks ago, I had the pleasure of spending a few hours with Len, discussing a broad range of topics within which he has played a significant role over many years.

I had no idea that he has such diversified talents. With Len's permission I would like to now share some of the highlights with fellow members.

My first surprise came when Len told me of his musical involvement. It seems that, as a lad of some seven years, he began by learning to play a violin.

Despite doubts about his abilities from the parental quarter, he persevered and went on to play strings in the Yorkshire Light Orchestra. Music has followed him throughout life and over the years he has constructed numerous steel guitars, many of which are still in regular use with Australian artists.

These days, Len can operate virtually a complete orchestra from his lounge room in the form of a sophisticated electronic organ. These talents are not to be lost as he routinely provides musical tuition to a group of enthusiastic students.

Len comes from a line of engineers in his Father and Grandfather and was apprenticed as a toolmaker at Hatterleys of Lancashire, Brass founders and engineers.

After receiving his papers, his first tradesmans job was at Churchill Machine Tools in Yorkshire. Len continued in this vein until just prior to the outbreak of World War II.

He subsequently joined a company called Miles Aircraft, as a toolmaker manufacturing aircraft components. (A slight diversion here when your Editor mentioned to Len that he had been a licensed pilot while living in Tasmania and had, in fact, flown a Miles Falcon, a light aircraft built by said company and with the flight performance of a brick. Len's only remark was that he had been involved with the design of several components of this flying machine. Your Editor went very quiet and changed the subject).

It seems that Miles Aircraft were the first to mass produce aeroplanes. They regularly built twelve machines a day before mass production and twenty four a day after, using no additional staff.

The company built trainer aircraft for the R.A.F. and Len remained in this position throughout the duration of the War.

His next move was rather interesting as it was to the Williamson Aircraft Camera Company. This firm developed and made aerial reconnaissance, survey and machine gun cameras - the latter for recording "kills" during aerial battles.

The final period of employment in the U.K. was with Thornycroft, manufacturing engines for air-sea rescue craft. Len moved to Australia in 1952.

At about this stage, Len related an incident which occurred at one of his U.K. workplaces. It seems that his lunchbox had somehow fallen into the hands of one of the resident comedians who had in turn, liberally laced the contents with pepper.

Upon discovering this misdemeanor our Len decided that revenge was in order and, not knowing who the perpetrator of the dastardly deed really was, reckoned that mass retribution was necessary.

The retaliation involved dosing the lunches of workmates with a strong, but not readily detectable, laxative. The result I shall leave to your imagination, however I did ask Len if this incident was in any way related to his moving to Australia. My answer came as a silent grin!

In Western Australia, Len joined the W.A.G. Railways workshops at Midland where, he was, among other things, involved in the construction of breeches for 25 pounder guns for the Army.

He was with W.A.G.R. for 6 years and one of his significant achievements was to modify the tooling on a Louden wheel lathe, thus enabling the machine to produce more accurate tread patterns for robbing stock.

The next and final move was to Royal Perth Hospital in the Technical Services Division dealing with instruments and appliances. Len eventually became Technical Officer in Charge, a position he held until retirement.

Achievements in this arena included a heart-lung machine, designed in collaboration with cardiac Surgeons, used for open heart operations and the first successful kidney machine.

Turning to model engineering, Len's interest goes back to when he was 7 years old and he won 1st prize in a model aircraft competition, he says he was well and truly hooked.

Later achievements have been a 3½"G Britannia and a 5"G Simplex. He is keen to have a go at a 5"G Scotsman when all the current projects have been completed. It seems he was inspired by the visit of the LNER machine last year.

A heart attack a while ago, which in lesser mortals would have been enough to cause cessation of activities, simply served to inspire Len further and he has developed equipment which makes life much less strenuous so that the hobby can continue. Notable in this regard is his all-singing and dancing loco stand which performs its manoeuvres accurately and without excessive effort.

Unfortunately, all good things must end and my time came to leave albeit to the strains of "Indian Summer" performed by the Master upon his electronic Organ, - almost made me feel important, it did!

My sincere thanks to Len and good Wife Tot for sharing some of their experiences with us all.

A.A.L.S. Convention

We have received notice of the 1991 Convention to be held at Salisbury, S.A..

This 35th get-together is hosted by the Penfield Model Engineers, and will be held during the period of March 28, 1991 through to Monday April 1, 1991, inclusive.

Further details from:
Penfield M.E.S.
P.O. Box 792
SALISBURY SA 5108.

Steam Oil

Members have asked about supplies of loco steam oil.

Peter Goddard holds a supply of Club lubricant which is available upon request.

Video Report

Lovers of the narrow gauge will be pleased to know that a new tape has been produced entitled "Tasmania- Arail Revival

October of 1990 saw the first steam hauled train on the Emu Bay Railway for many years. Consisting of MA 2 a pacific class, built in 1951 and similar to the local PM class together with CCS 25 built in 1905 (similar to WAGR G class 2-6-0) and modified with a belpaire fire box as well as outside Walschaerts gear.

Coaches are preserved stock ex T.G.R. and the entire train was restored and is owned by Don River Tramway, Devonport.

The scenery is very rugged and the locos work hard on the steeply graded and sharply curved track. The track is quite rough in places and the engines leap violently at times.

Other sections of the tape show Emu Bay operations of today with queensland built 10 and 11 class diesel hydraulics hauling raw material from Rosebery to the port of Burnie. This is a private line and today operates at a profit.

Interestingly, this Company was one of the few systems to successfully use Australian Standard Garratts albeit with two firemen on the footplate.

A.N.R. (formerly T.G.R.) operations of today are also featured.

An interesting video for those who appreciate the narrow gauge. Available from Derrick Enterprises, Kalamunda, cost \$39.95.

Derrick Enterprises have also produced tapes of W.A.G.R. operations immediately prior to the cessation of steam power together with more modern scenes. They also have a tape depicting the Pilbara railways. I have not seen either of these as yet, however hints have been dropped for Christmas.

I hope that readers will overlook the occasional error in these notes. Your Editor-cum-typist for some of this work has laboured with one finger to produce the result, which aint perticercly great but, I hope, understandable. A typist I'm not!

Thats it for now. I wish you all a safe and happy Christmas and many hours of productive model engineering in the coming year.

Regards,


Balcatta Steam-Up

With the success of the November event the Committee has planned another for Saturday 12 January 1990, commencing at 1600 hours. (4 pm)

As we are now in the fire danger period, we cannot use the Clubs wood - Fired barbecues. Members with a gas barbecue are asked to bring them along on this occasion.

LATE
NEWS