

STEAM**LINES****NORTHERN DISTRICTS MODEL ENGINEERING SOCIETY (PERTH) INC.****January—February 2016**

2016: WHERE DO YOU WANT US TO GO?

WELCOME to a new year! With a very productive 2015 behind us, we are about to start planning for hopefully an equally productive year covering all aspects of our operation.

We have been travelling well of late, with membership as high as it has ever been and a host of capital developments recently completed.

But, bearing in mind that none of us is getting any younger, in what direction should we now go? This is where you, the members, come in. Let us (the committee) know how you want the society to develop.

We can enthuse about attracting new, younger members to our ranks. But in so doing, what plans can we formulate to cater for and further their interest in model engineering? Maybe a first step in attracting younger blood to our ranks is AMRA. There should be a ready-made market to tap into.

We have two or three members who have already indicated a commitment to this year's AMRA expo, so any member wishing to join this team please let the president know.

On the work front, we have a dedicated "Dad's Army" of volunteers who regularly turn up on Tuesdays, no matter what the weather (we now have plenty of covered work areas).

They represent less than 25 per cent of our paid-up membership. But there are the Saturdays, when some other members could lend a hand with a myriad of things that need to be done to keep our railway and grounds operational.

So, what of the future? A garden railway at last? A new signalling system? Utilisation of all of our track?

One of our new members with a vast experience in running a real railway has identified the functions of an effective signalling system as the safe running of trains, facilitating traffic movements and maximising track capacity. Hopefully, 2016 will see some major progress in this area.

Membership has continued to rise and is now somewhere around the mid-60s. A few former members have dropped by the wayside, but have been more than replaced by our new members.

Looking back on 2015, the highlights included the November Sandgropers Gathering, which attracted over 120 "delegates", our 30th birthday celebrations earlier in the year and "off-campus" members' meetings.

On the model engineering front, Steve Reeves and Phill Gibbons have actively promoted boiler brazing days and there has been renewed interest in our monthly run days. With the new steam-up shed and patio lighting installed, there is no reason why we cannot have fun with a night run or three during the coming year.

On a more sombre note, we lost two popular and hard-working members during the year, Tony Jones and Colin Osborn. Tony's lasting legacy lies in both the track and clubhouse, in which he took a leading, active role. Colin missed out by just a couple of days in showcasing in steam at Sandgropers his pride and joy, the traction engine he had taken many years to build.

But now, with the start of a new year, come along, get involved and enjoy the fruits of your workshop labours.

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Sandgropers 2015



Clive Jarman steams up his traction engine at Sandgropers, watched by Dave Robinson. **See pages 9-12 for full coverage...**

Looking at 2016 through a crystal ball

SO, after a somewhat hectic 2015, I've unpacked my crystal ball to see what we can possibly look forward to in 2016?

On a personal level, I know there are a number of model engineering projects under way in home workshops. The fruits of these labours will be awaited with interest.

At the club level, there will be more track work undertaken by Ken, Andy and Steve B, possibly another line in the workshop for 7¼" rolling stock and an extra bay for train make-up behind the 5" carriage shed.

Signalling will be very much on the agenda as we try to have more control over the increasing train movements and ensure increased safety at our monthly running days. Top of the wish list in this area would be an integrated signalling system. One key area is the approach to the tunnel. While Dennis, John M and John S have sorted out the gremlins which have been bugging the raised track approach to the tunnel, there is no signalling for the ground level track and simply adhering to the raised track signals has pitfalls.

In the bigger picture, we need a fail-safe signalling system to control trains approaching the ground level track points at the bottom of the back straight – and until this is devised and installed, the bank on the back straight will remain out of use for passenger haulage.

Hopefully, a signalling expert within our ranks will take this on. Well, he hasn't said "no" yet!

Now that we have the GLT station by-pass line in operation again, thanks to work by several members on the points approaching the station, it would be good to see a signalling panel on the patio to control these trains. To my way of thinking, this would be essential if the back straight comes into operation as this will require trains leaving the station using the workshop approach line before traversing the station by-pass to resume the present route.

At the November public run, we trialled a three-car train. While a couple of drivers had difficulty in coming to terms with the guard being the train manager and his/her signals being acknowledged, particularly on leaving the station, it was a success.

President's Report



by Tom Winterbourn

For this to be progressed, there needs to be guard training and knowledge by both guards and drivers of the whistle code.

Station congestion has been another problem on busy days, so a start could be made on the proposed bridge, to get arriving passengers back into the picnic grounds without having to fight their way through queues of passengers waiting for rides. The entrance/exit "races" could then be used to channel passengers to either GLT or 5"

trains. This is a big project which will require outside finance in the form of a grant.

Now, here's something out of left field! The small club petrol loco recently completed by Ken Austin, which has been used of late to get rolling stock, including the club steam loco, from the workshop to the steaming shed and storage lines, could be "dressed up" to take on a "Thomas" persona, although we probably couldn't call it as such because of copyright laws. Our young patrons would love it! And the loco is sufficiently powerful to easily haul two carriages.

Hopefully, the garden railway project will get underway in 2016 under John Turney.

Then there is AMRA, with a commitment to again participate with train rides after deciding not to do so in 2015. This time around, we plan to use battery-powered locos.

And ... we hopefully have another couple of gigs with the BBQ at bi-annual Hare & Forbes sales, the one later in the year being at the company's new warehouse. The fabrication team has suggested the latest "earnings" be put towards a 7 inch bandsaw for the workshop.

While all this is going on, we have grounds, track and rolling stock to maintain!

The monthly club running days will continue on the Sunday after the members' meeting (usually, but not always the second Sunday) and I encourage all members to use the "show and tell" component of our monthly meetings to promote the model engineering side of our society.

Enjoy 2016!

Tom Winterbourn

Calendar of Forthcoming Events

General Meeting	Friday	8 January	8:00 pm
Club Run Day	Sunday	10 January	9:00 am — 2:00 pm
Public Run Day	Sunday	31 January	10:00 am — 2:00 pm
General Meeting	Friday	12 February	8:00 pm
Club Run Day	Sunday	14 February	9:00 am — 2:00 pm
Public Run Day	Sunday	28 February	10:00 am — 2:00 pm

Allen soars to new heights with this eagle

IT was a very proud Allen Ward who displayed this eagle cast in aluminium in the “Show and Tell” segment of the December members’ meeting.

Allen has always been interested in foundry work and when he learnt that Midland TAFE would conduct such a course, he jumped at it, willingly parting with \$450.

On the third of three night’s instruction, Allen surprised his instructor by taking on the ambitious project of making this eagle, cast in three parts. The detail is amazing.

A full story on Allen’s foundry training will be published in the March -April edition of Steam Lines. In the meantime, Allen is looking forward to enrolling in the next course, starting on February 2.



Innovations at the November run

THE November public run trialled three new operational innovations to help move the big number of passengers. Firstly, the station by-pass line was used if there was a train occupying the station. The drivers manually operated the new points switch at the approach to the station (installed by Andrew Manning) and then the switch at the station exit – all without incident.

With this system in use, it is incumbent on drivers preparing to leave the station to firstly check that no train is passing through on the by-pass line and also check he has a “green” signal. A through train will automatically leave a “red” station line signal in its wake.

With passengers paying to enter the grounds and not per ride, there is no inequity if a train does a second “lap”. To accommodate the growing passenger queue on what was a perfect day, it was decided to add a third carriage to the train hauled by Dave Robinson’s yellow Westrail diesel. This necessitated a qualified guard with flags and whistle at the rear of the train. Both Tanya

Macarthur and Tom Winterbourn took on this role.

With the guard becoming the train manager, it also requires the driver to acknowledge the guard’s signal both during departure from the station and if the journey is disrupted for whatever reason. After a few runs, the drivers adapted well!

A guard also makes the important job of protecting the rear of a train in the event of a hold-up that much easier.

The third innovation was the use of the two new sidings alongside Vasto Place. Well before the start of public running, the club’s yellow diesel was used to bring carriages and the club steam loco down from the 7¼” storage shed. This obviated the need for the carriages to be stored on the bank. Locos simply picked up the carriages on their way to the station.

An appropriate training scheme for guards is being devised.

**A report on the November run and pictures are on page 6.*

November meeting presentation

AFTER all the activity at Sandgroppers the previous weekend, there was still a good roll-up of 25 members at the November meeting on November 13.

Animated discussion took place on several issues, principally the failure of the tunnel approach signalling system and the success of Sandgroppers.

There was just one “Show and Tell” presentation, with Steve Reeves giving a progress report on the boiler he is building for his 7¼” Juliet. This is one of three boilers being built concurrently by Steve, Phill Gibbons and Rob Otway for their respective Juliets.

Steve is pictured here during his presentation.



‘Mr Fabricator’ turns 80, but keep it quiet!

KEN Cooper is a regular member of Tuesday’s Dad’s Army, but on December 8 he was conspicuous by his absence.

Why? Because it was his 80th birthday and wanted it kept quiet with no fuss.

Fellow fabricator Andy Davis got the master fabricator on the phone and urged him to come to the club, otherwise we would be throwing away two cakes (don’t let the facts spoil a good story!).

Well, Ken did turn up during “smoko” and any wishes he may have had about a quiet birthday were well and truly dashed, with perhaps the whole neighbourhood reverberating to the sound of “Happy Birthday”!

Yer looking good for 80, Ken!



Ken Cooper takes a slice of his 80th birthday cake from Andy Davis, with Clive Chapman looking on.

Have you changed address or contact details?

WITH the start of a new calendar year, we are updating our membership contact details.

So, if you have changed address or phone/email addresses recently, could you please let us know?

Send your updated details to treasurer Damien Outram at damienoutram@yahoo.com.au.

Know your Society

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Cruel twist of fate denies Colin his big day

THE club said farewell to popular member Colin Osborn on November 20 at a funeral service at Fremantle Cemetery. Fifteen club representatives were among the 120 mourners present.

Colin suffered a cerebral haemorrhage on November 5 and died 10 days later in Fiona Stanley Hospital. He was 78 and had been a member of NDMES for eight years.

In a cruel twist of fate, Colin was prevented from enjoying his big day at the Sandgroppers Gathering on November 7 and 8, when he was to have publicly unveiled his 2" (to the foot) Ruston traction engine. But he was denied this big occasion by just two days.

Colin had taken out a family registration for himself, wife Margaret and six members of their family for the occasion.

The engine had been his labour of love for the past eight years and it had only recently been completed. It had been steamed just twice before his untimely death.

At the "wake" at the family home after the funeral service, Steve Reeves, Richard Turner and Clive Chapmen fired up the engine for Margaret and other



family members to see. It ran like a well-oiled sewing machine.

Club vice-president Phill Gibbons said Colin "was a tradesman from the old school, the likes of which we will never see again".

"He was a toolmaker, one of the people with skills that made British tools and machinery the best in the world," he said.

"Now, of course, computers and CNC machines have made tradesmen redundant. RIP Colin."

Colin's grandson, Andrew Glover, said he would try to make arrangements for the engine to be displayed, in steam, at the 2016 AMRA expo in June.

A minute's silence in Colin's honour was observed at the December members' meeting-cum-Christmas party on December 13.



Above left: Clive Chapman, Steve Reeves and Richard Turner work on preparing the traction engine for steaming, watched by (from left) John Shugg, Ken Cooper, Andrew Manning and Paul James. Richard has almost completed an identical traction engine.

Left: Margaret Osborn stands behind the engine in steam with Steve Reeves, Richard Turner and Clive Chapman. Evidence of it being in steam is provided by smoke from the chimney and a blurring of the flywheel.

That's more like it!

AFTER several months of “average” weather and patronage, the November public run made a welcome return to normality, with both excellent weather and support from the general public.

Eight party bookings also kept members busy placing tables and chairs in the picnic grounds and preparing BBQs, plus cleaning up at the end of the day.

Damien Outram's new 5" diesel outline made its public run debut and performed well, even though Paul J had to request some ear plugs to block out the simulated drone of the diesel engine!



Harry and his Westrail diesel haul a three-car train with registered guard Tanya Macarthur at the rear.

Dad Noel also had his similarly-equipped 5" diesel on duty, but this didn't hit the track until later in the day, due to more pressing concerns over a technical problem with his VW van.

Ron Collins' 7¼" 0-4-2 steam loco was back after a couple of months absence and the ever-present Dave Robinson-owned yellow Co-Co diesel was also in use, along with the club's orange 7¼" diesel and the 5" locos of Steve Briggs (who had another good run with Klipspringer), Steve Reeves' Blowfly and Paul Costall (Firefly).

Andy Davis manned the BBQ, providing a snag and roll for all on duty. Here are some pics taken of the action:



Three abreast approaching the station: Damien Outram climbs into the raised track platform with his new diesel as Ron Collins and his 7¼ 0-4-2 and Paul Costall on his 5" Firefly head down the bank towards the tunnel.



Harry Roser approaches the station on his former, but now club loco.



New member Bill Walker chats to Richard Turner in the steam-up shed alongside the club steam loco.



Who's a happy boy, then? Steve Reeves acknowledges the camera driving his Blowfly.

Hold on to your hat there, Ron! With Mr Ed absent, Ron spent more time than usual driving his No. 1 – and here he copes with a breeze and swirling smoke.



The classic driving “stance” of Paul Costall – again the biggest man on the smallest loco!

'Ironbar' drops in to say hello at H&F sale

ONE of the most colourful characters in Federal Parliament over the past three decades dropped in to say "hello" to our crew at the Hare & Forbes sale on November 13.

Former minister and formidable parliamentary performer Wilson "Ironbar" Tuckey showed considerable interest in our display, in particular Steve Reeves' boiler for his new Juliet and Ron Collins' Fowler traction engine, and also enjoyed a "snag" with members.

He also found common ground on some issues with John Turney and the two have since exchanged emails!

The club again manned the BBQ at this bi-annual sale over the three days (November 13 to 15).

We had a comprehensive display this time around, with the traction engines of Ron Collins and Paul Costall present on the Thursday and Friday respectively and Andrew Manning's Foden steam truck and Richard Turner's Polly loco "Suzanne" both in steam on the Saturday, with "Suzanne" on rollers on a hydraulic table.

At one stage on the Thursday, Ron and his Fowler entered the warehouse, but had to beat a hasty retreat when smoke from the chimney drifted up towards the fire alarms!

Phill Gibbons also set up a lathe provided by H&F boss Greg Adams, but the planned demonstrations were thwarted by a lack of interest by customers!

Some members took advantage of the double discounts to buy components for their workshops.

Mr Tuckey represented the seat of O'Connor in the House of Representatives from 1980 to 2010 and became one of its most controversial figures.

He came by the nickname "Ironbar" in 1967 when, as a Carnarvon publican, he was convicted of assault after striking an Aboriginal man with a length of steel cable.

His clashes with then Prime Minister Paul Keating in the mid-80s were legendary. In one stoush, the PM called Mr Tuckey a "piece of criminal garbage".

In another, after Mr Tuckey had called the PM "an idiot" and "a hopeless nong", he was told by the PM to "shut up, sit down and shut up, you pig. Why do you not shut up, you clown?"

Mr Tuckey is now leading a quieter life in Kelmscott.



Wilson Tuckey pictured with Steve Reeves and John Turney.



After watching Ron Collins steam up the Fowler traction engine, Mr Tuckey took ample photographs.

Geoff launches Q&A segment

Steam Lines is encouraging members with a problem or just seeking guidance in their model engineering pursuits to send an email to the editor and he will get it answered by a competent person.

The first member to take up this offer is Geoff Wilkinson, who writes: I am about to prepare my regulator bush in the smokebox tubeplate for a 3/8 inch 'O' ring and would like to know what is the best profile to machine this to. I am thinking of making it curved to match the external profile of the 'O' ring.

Boiler inspector Phill Gibbons answers: As a general rule, so you don't spend all day in research, the width of

the groove is 1.5 times the section of the 'O' ring and the depth of the groove is three-quarters the section of the 'O' ring. The groove is, of course, square with all the corners broken.

Other members with puzzling dilemmas are encouraged to write to the editor, twinterbourn@ozemail.com.au, and he will arrange for an expert response.

Sure, it is easier to just ask one of the many experts we have in our society, but by "going public", you are helping other members who may come across the same or similar problems.

2016 ends with Christmas fun and cheer

FOR most of our members, 2015 ended with a Christmas fun run on December 12, with about half the membership present, plus some CMR members bearing Christmas fayre.

CMR held its Christmas dinner the previous night and with so much turkey, ham, beef, etc. left over, Clive Woodward and co decided to join us for a sort of “after party”! The food was gratefully accepted.



Watched by CMR founder Keith Watson, Black 5 approaches the station driven by young CMR member Dion.



New member Bill Walker driving Black 5. As a shedmaster in the UK, Bill used to be responsible for the ubiquitous Black 5s, but this was the first time he had driven a miniature version.



Barry Pearce takes wife Tricia for a spin behind the club battery loco.

The BBQs were also lit up for the odd snag or two.

Dennis was there with his 3½” Atlantic, but after six years on the shelf, it didn’t particularly like being steamed up! Oh well, next time?

The Black 5 made a welcome return after Phill had thrown some Christmas wiffle dust over it – and it performed well, with various members and visitors behind the regulator.

It was a jolly, relaxed affair, with some choosing to stay under the patio awning to eat and drink while others chose the picnic grounds.

Santa failed to make an appearance, something the powers that be will have to look into!

Here are some pics taken at the function:



Jim Crawford caught by surprise at the lunch table!

Round table conference putting the world straight towards the end of the day.



Dennis Lord munches his way through the afternoon.



The unmistakable shape of Paul Costall driving his Blowfly “Firefly”.



Paul James with Bushfly.

Sandgropers was a big success

MORE than 120 registrations from across WA helped to make the 12th Sandgropers Gathering we hosted on November 7 and 8 a great occasion.

We had delegates from as far away as Geraldton and Kalgoorlie, with five visiting clubs represented — Castledare Miniature Railway, South West Model Engineers' Society at Bunbury, Katanning Miniature Railway, Batavia Coast Miniature Railway (Geraldton) and Cohuna Park Miniature Railway.

This annual event has previously been hosted by SWMEA, but this year the event was organised by NDMES, the original partner when the event was established in 2004. It was good to see up to 20 members of SWMEA present.

The gathering also incorporated the 6th Annual Miniature Traction Rally, with 12 steam traction engines present.

The event will, in future, alternate between Bunbury and Balcatta, with next year's event being hosted by SWMEA.

A sad part of the traction engine rally was the sudden illness on November 5 (and subsequent passing) of NDMES member Colin Osborn, who was to have “unveiled” his new 2” traction engine just two days later after eight years of work (see story, page 5).

A highlight of the mini convention was the dinner, attended by 60 delegates, under the new patio awning on the Saturday night. It marked the first time the covered patio with new lighting had been used for a specific function. The delegates sat down to a professionally catered main course and sweet – and all agreed the food was excellent.



Clive Chapman has every reason to look pleased with himself as he pulls out of the station behind his GWR 2-4-0 with charismatic documentary producer Ashleigh and guest Vincent during the filming of a documentary.

Another highlight was the tractor pull, in which most of the steam traction engines participated.

Some traction engines were equipped with riding trolleys, which enabled passengers to travel behind this form of traction from a by-gone era into the adjoining reserve.

The 5” section of the dual gauge 7¼”/5” ground level track also had its first real test since the GLT was installed about three years ago and no problems were reported. Previously 5” locos had only used the raised track.

In preparation for the event, new lighting was installed in the steam-up shed for night operations and two new storage tracks were laid nearby, both proving immensely useful.

Some of those who attended the event are pictured here and in following pages:



Above left: Lights on for the first time! Some of the 60 guests at the Saturday night dinner.



The vegetarians were first off with the food at the Saturday night dinner. From the left, Jenny De Gouw (partly obscured), Clive Jarman and Doug Pitney.



Easy rider: Paul James on guard duty!

Sandgropers 2015 (cont...)



Barry Pearce gives Steve Briggs a hand in firing up B1 "Klipspringer".



Ed Brown yet again proudly shows off his new 5" WAGR Es loco to Bob Hutt (left) and Ron Otway. But also yet again it didn't steam on to the tracks!

Ken Austin steams up on the Saturday.



Right: Ron Collins and Paul Costall stop for a chat!



Gilbert Ness fires up his new GWR 5" King loco, which he recently imported from the UK to add to his growing stable of locos. Clive Chapman looks on. Gilbert was pleased with its performance on the day. And yes, it does have the four cylinders.



Jim Clark provides details of his 3" Allchin to young member Meldon Bruce-Hall.



Paul Costall shares a joke with former member Stu Martin.



Ron Collins and Ian Huxtable discuss Ron's first steam traction engine – only the second scale traction engine model to be built in WA.



SWMEA president Jeff Clifton hands over the regulator of his 2-6-2 to grandson Liam.

Sandgropers 2015 (cont...)



A busy scene in the traction engine area on the Saturday morning.



Harrison Mills (CMR) brings the CMR club loco "Dennis P Moore" into the station with CMR founder and loco builder Keith Watson and Allen Ward in tow.



Richard Turner gives "Suzanne" her first run on the GLT, with a new "bum truck" and water supply. Everything went well.

Right: Jaco De Lange gives the thumbs up as he takes his 7¼" 0-4-2 "Bridget" for a spin on the Saturday.



Meldon Bruce-Hall behind the controls of the club diesel with Luke Mills (CMR) in the carriage.

Left: Graham Pailthorpe (SWMEA) has his engine on full throttle in the tractor pull.



Left: Paul James and Barry and Trish Pearce enjoy a break from duties.

Right: Two young members of the Dewers family from Geraldton steam up their little 7¼" 0-4-0, appropriately named "Tich", outside the workshop.



Sandgropers 2015 (cont...)



Ken Austin steams past the workshop with Meldon Bruce-Hall and Allen Ward in tow.



Scott Andrews with his 0-4-2 No 1 late on the second day. Below: Noel Outram with his "Bo-Bo" battery-powered loco.



Steve Dewers (BCMR) gets to know the Foden steam truck, with owner Andrew Manning looking on. Steve later bought the Foden and took it back to Geraldton.



Paul Costall takes to the paddock with his Fowler "Showman".



Phill Gibbons gets to drive a King! Here he is with Gilbert Ness' new acquisition, taking Ed Brown for a ride.



"How big?"
Ron Collins spins some fishy tale to Ian Huxtable



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