



NORTHERN DISTRICTS MODEL ENGINEERING SOCIETY (PERTH) INC.

November—December 2015

A year to look back on with satisfaction

AS we approach the end of another year, we can look back on 2015 as 12 months of progress and thank God for the skills and enthusiasm we have in our society.

Our membership continues to grow and all facets of our operation have developed in tandem. The big ticket items have been the new patio awning and associated soakwells to drain rainwater away, the lighting in both the steam-up shed and under the patio awning and the track work, with new points fabricated and laid.

On the model engineering side, Steve R, Phill and Rob have been conducting boiler brazing days, the club run days have picked up in support and the garden railway at the back of the block is getting closer (honest!). In addition to the patio awning, “new” fencing has been installed, giving a clear view of open run day operations while relaxing over lunch, or whatever. The fencing was not what we originally planned (picket), but it did come cheap!

The new workshop is proving its worth, providing ample facilities for the track crew, although we may have under-estimated a little the required capacity for loco and carriage storage. This will have to be addressed. We have continued our involvement in the Hare & Forbes bi-annual sale days, which has helped bolster our finances, but we have rued the decision not to be involved with running trains at AMRA this year. Hopefully we will be back next year.

We have also had three off-campus members’ meetings, which have been well-received.

Our Tuesday crew continues to be the backbone of our operations, with at least a dozen members turning up every week getting on with the job of improving our facilities – and socialising!

There was healthy competition for committee positions at the recent AGM, with Dave Robinson being the new face, and we are getting some new younger blood involved in the society.

Then there are Cathy and Jean: Where would we be without them on public run days? They have not the slightest interest in model engineering or miniature railways as such, but because of a family connection (Jim Crawford) have continued dedicated support over a number of years and provide happy, welcoming faces for our increasing number of visitors.

The president’s annual report on Page 2 deals with our achievements over the past 12 months in more detail, but suffice to say here all facets of our model engineering and miniature railway operations have developed – thanks to our energetic and enthusiastic members.

And finally, with Christmas just around the corner, compliments of the season to you all – and don’t forget our own Christmas celebrations on Sunday, December 13, following a brief members’ meeting.

Steam rides of a different kind



A new dimension to our public running days of late has been rides on a rubber-tyred riding truck behind Andrew Manning’s Foden steam lorry at the rear of our site. At the October run, Andrew had to leave the club for a while, but returned to continue offering his unique service. He is pictured here steaming up again in early afternoon.

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President's 2015 annual report

The first 12 months of my presidency have seen many changes, a surge in memberships, an increased involvement by members in all activities and great camaraderie, particularly among the Dad's Army Tuesday work crew.

While public support for our monthly run days has been mixed, in line with the weather, they have generally added greatly to our coffers.

While we have spent a fair amount of money on various major projects, principally the new workshop and patio awning, we are still in reasonably good financial shape.

During the year we celebrated our 30th birthday, with some "blasts from the past" joining us. A highlight of this was the unveiling of the new honour board by Stirling Mayor Giovanni Italiano.

If all our financial members from the past year renewed their memberships, plus the new members we have welcomed, our membership will be nudging 70 – higher than it has been for a number of years. There is also valuable regeneration with younger enthusiasts joining our ranks.

The much-talked about garden railway is now back on the agenda, thanks to John Turney and Dave Robinson, who has prepared the designated area at the rear of our block.

The patio awning is up and has attracted only positive comment, while lighting has been installed in the steam-up shed by Jaco de Lange. The wood paling fence around the patio has been replaced by green metal fencing which came our way at no charge.

Track improvements continue under the guidance of Ken Cooper and the latest addition is a new storage siding alongside Vasto Place, in time for Sandgropers.

The container has been moved back into the corner of the block (thanks to Richard and his friends at Universal Crane Hire), providing about 30 square metres of extra space. The

President's Report



by Tom Winterbourn

club now has three club locos, two diesel outline and one steam, and extra carriages. Thanks to Harry, the orange loco now has a new engine and electric ignition, at no charge to the society.

The club has also held three off-campus members' meetings, at Ken Austin's factory in Malaga, at Scitech in West Perth and at SMC Pneumatics in Ascot.

And what of the immediate future? In November, we will really be on show to our

peers as we host the Sandgropers Gathering and a week later, we will have another interactive exhibition at the Hare & Forbes sale. Our involvement in this bi-annual event, manning the BBQ, has been both enjoyable and financially rewarding, along with the extra discount we get on sale items.

Our participation this year will increase, with a traction engine or lorry in steam every day, thanks to Ron, Paul Costall and Andrew. Richard's Polly will also be in steam and operating on rollers on one day and Phill Gibbons will give a daily machining display on one of H&F's lathes.

(Continued on page 3)



The "face" of the Stirling Miniature Railway: Cathy McCafferty and "mom" Jean Crawford are an essential element of our monthly public runs. They are the "welcomers", cashiers, canteen operators, toilet cleaners et al. Without them, we men folk would be in dire straits. Here Jean and Cathy enjoy a chat with a visitor at the October run.

Calendar of Forthcoming Events

Sandgropers at NDMES	Sat-Sunday	7-8 November	All Day	NDMES Track Site, Balcatta
General Meeting	Friday	13 November	8:00 pm	
Club Run Day	Sunday	15 November	9:00 am — 2:00 pm	
Public Run Day	Sunday	29 November	10:00 am — 2:00 pm	
NDMES Xmas / Run Day	Sunday	13 December	11:30 am — 5:00 pm	
Short General Meeting	Sunday	13 December	1:00 pm	
Public Run Day		December	- No public run day	

President's 2015 annual report (cont...)

(Continued from page 2)

There are plans for a new bridge to get passengers back into the picnic grounds without the crush on the existing bridge on busy days, a new signalling system and the possible expansion of our track by bringing into permanent use the "back straight".

The tunnel roof has been sealed and various members, including George, Jaco, Andrew, John Turney and Colin have levelled the top soil ready for landscaping and a possible public viewing platform – after Harry had removed much of the unwanted soil with his tractor.

So, all-in-all, a good report card as we head into a new year with a new committee. But I accept no credit for the progress made over the past 12 months; that is down to those members who have been most active in the society, principally those who regularly attend the Tuesday work days and also on a Saturday morning.

Similarly, the success of our general public running

days is also largely due to those who have and drive locos, members who undertake important duties on the day and, of course, Cathy and Jean in the canteen, who are literally the face of our society and without whom we would find it difficult to handle our public patrons.

It is also pleasing to report an upturn in our club run day activities, after a somewhat slow start. This is a most important component of our model engineering heritage.

In similar vein are the boiler brazing days organised by Steve Reeves. They have been well-attended and are an import educational tool within our society.

And finally I would like to thank my fellow committee members for their time and dedication over the past 12 months.

Now, continue to enjoy your society and the camaraderie it provides.

Tom Winterbourn

Compliments of the season

AS this will be the last Steam Lines for the year, on behalf of the committee I would like to wish you every happiness this Christmas and New Year.

It has been a good year, so now go out and celebrate!

It is my fervent hope that all members and their family and friends have a most fulfilling and joyous festive season.

Please also remember we have our own Christmas celebrations on Sunday, December 13. This is the scheduled club run day but, as is our custom, it will be our chance to celebrate the coming festive season amongst ourselves.

Tom Winterbourn, President

Dave the new face on the committee

THIRTY-TWO members attended the club's AGM in the clubhouse on October 9, when the new committee was voted in.

Unlike recent years, there was real competition for committee positions, with Dave Robinson being the new face for 2015-16.



Members of the new committee after the AGM. From the left, Tom Winterbourn, Dave Robinson, Paul James, Paul Costall and Damien Outram. Absent from the meeting were Gilbert Ness, Geoff Wilkinson and Phill Gibbons.

With seven nominations for four positions, Steve Reeves withdrew, due to uncertainty over his availability because of irregular work shifts.

While Harry Roser and Steve Briggs were unsuccessful, they can take heart from the fact that each polled only two votes fewer than the fourth elected committee member. Re-elected to the committee were Paul Costall, Geoff Wilkinson and Gilbert Ness.

Elected unopposed were president Tom Winterbourn, vice-president Phill Gibbons, secretary Paul Costall and treasurer Damien Outram.

Following the AGM, three new members were welcomed to the club at the general members' meeting. They were Scott Andrews, Tanya Mackellar and Steve McAllister (from Geraldton).

Damien takes on new role – that of husband

CLUB treasurer Damien Outram tied the knot with fiancée Marnie Watson in a ceremony held in a perfect setting with ideal weather on the South Perth foreshore on October 17.

As if on cue, two vintage bi-planes took off from Langley Park to provide an aerial salute, flying over the wedding ceremony in St James Mitchell Park (right).

Damien had plenty of support from the miniature railway and model engineering



Craig Belcher, Tom Winterbourn, Damien and Marnie, Noel Outram and Paul James at the wedding.

fraternity, with Dad Noel (NDMES boiler inspector), NDMES president Tom Winterbourn, immediate past president Paul James and Craig Belcher, until recently president of Castledare Miniature Railway, attending.

Marnie was walked to the ceremony and “given away” by her son Seth.

Seventy guests later attended the formal reception at the Tawarri Reception and Function Centre in Dalkeith.

Three days after the ceremony, Damien and Marnie headed off on their honeymoon to the US, UK and Dubai.

Know your Society

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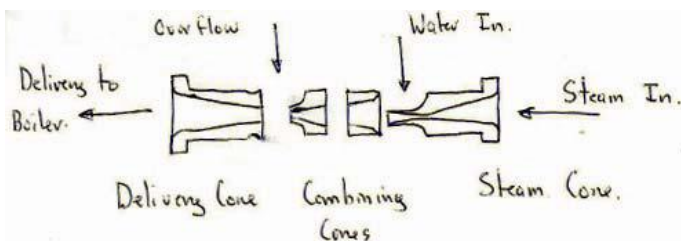
Injectors: Where would we be without them!

ONE of the most common subjects discussed in and around the steaming bay concerns injectors.

Some people find them hard to use, yet most of the “so-called” problems can be sorted out quite easily.

An injector works by transferring the energy of steam into water in such a way as to overcome boiler pressure and feed water into the boiler.

It does this through a series of tapered cones, as shown in the diagram below.



Water flows at the point where the steam cone meets the first of the combining cones. As the steam flows through the steam cone, the pressure drops and the speed of the steam particles increases. This then condenses in the water as the two combine in the combining cones.

Pressure continues to drop while speed increases.

In the gap between the second combining cone and the delivery cone, pressure is only about ½ psi, but the speed is near that of sound!

The delivery cone reduces the speed, increasing the pressure above that of the boiler pressure, thus feeding water into the boiler.

Problem diagnoses

The most common problem is dirt (minute particles) in the injectors, as the water supply is never perfectly clean. With the fine tolerances found in the cones of the injector, they can easily get blocked. Any obstruction will affect performance.

The tell-tale sign of particles in the injector is a drop off in performance and reduced high pressure when starting.

I clean mine in lemon juice or vinegar, both mild acids. Never pull the cones out or poke anything into them. Leave the cone assembly in the lemon/vinegar solution for 24 to 48 hours and then flush out with clean water.

The next most common cause of injector failure is air in the water supply line from the tender or side tanks and blocked filters. Again, the tell-tale sign is an intermittent flow of water out of the injector overflow

THE injector is an ingenious device developed to get cold water into a boiler against the working steam pressure of a miniature locomotive – usually around 100 psi. Without an injector, steam locos could not operate.

In this second in a series of articles on miniature steam loco essentials, boiler inspector Steve Reeves offers some insights into what can go wrong with these sometimes temperamental pieces of equipment.

This article follows the initial series on combustion, by Jim Crawford.

pipe. The injector may also be spluttering when in operation. Air leaks can appear in any hose connection or joint. Water valves can leak where the handle passes into the body.

A good technique in fault-finding is to put a clear plastic pipe in the supply line. If there is an air leak, you will see bubbles in the water flow when operating the injector.

A fine mesh filter is required in the supply line. They come in stainless steel and brass and can be obtained from model engineering suppliers.

Filters used for petrol in cars tend to be too fine whereas filters used in irrigation are too coarse, so I choose not to use either.

If you see steam coming out of the injector's overflow pipe, it is most likely leaking from clack (check) valves.

Unfortunately, with most engines, this cannot be fixed while the engine is in steam.

Tip: I no longer use stainless steel balls in a clack valve – they rust! I choose to use only bronze balls.

Wow, Mr Ed!



What a big engine you have! Ed Brown fired up his new 5" WAGR Es class loco, but injector problems prevented him from taking to the track. Ed is pictured here with Paul Costall (left) and Ken Cooper.

Big clean-up followed by BBQ and play

OVER 20 members heeded the call for a clean-up of the grounds on October 11 in readiness for the Sandgropers Gathering on November 7 and 8.

After cleaning up in the morning, the club laid on a BBQ lunch before members went off and did what they do best – play trains!

After all, it was a designated club run day.

Some of those who attended the day are pictured here:



Below: An unusual view of an unusual combination: Jaco De Lange gives Linda Jennings a quick trip around the track behind his green 0-4-2 Bridget..

Some of those members who stayed for lunch socialise around the BBQ.

Below: Wayne Dunn still learning the ropes on Maisie.



New storage lines for Sandgropers

NEW 7¼" gauge loco and carriage storage sidings alongside Vasto Place were laid during October in preparation for the Sandgropers Gathering.

The all-new turnout off the main line had been made in the workshop by Ken Cooper, Andy Davies and Ian Huxtable and finished off with the help of Steve Briggs, now a regular member of Tuesday's "Dad's Army" following his recent retirement.

With Ian now not permitted to undertake welding on health grounds Steve, who has a welding "ticket", has stepped into the void to take on this task.

The former CMR turnout, which has not been used for some time, was stripped and used as the basis for the second set of points.

Two 6m lengths of straight track were laid in each of the two sidings.

The storage lines do not provide access for 5" rolling stock.



The new turnout is just about complete, with Steve Briggs grinding the welds flat, watched by Phill Gibbons, with Ken Cooper and Andy Davies checking on clearances with the points blades.

Putting the record straight

DESPITE what seemed at the time as a pretty thorough search of our records to get the names correct for the honour board in the clubhouse, it appears we didn't get it quite right.

The board was officially unveiled by Stirling Mayor Giovanni Italiano at the society's 30th anniversary celebrations earlier this year.

In researching the names of office bearers over the past three decades, we referred to our archives, minutes of meetings and copies of the club magazine Steam Lines.

While there were a couple of grey areas, we were confident that, in the main, we had got it right. But it was in one of those grey areas where we apparently didn't quite get it right. It has been brought to the committee's notice that Jim Crawford was secretary for one year, in 1987/8 and that Jim was also vice-president, believed to be in 1986/7.

After these revelations, amendments will be made to the honour board, as this represents the society's record of executive officers since inception.

In our report on the founding of the society, it appears we may have been wrong again with regard to Jim being a founding member and not recognised as such. It appears the confusion arose because Jim did attend the inaugural meeting, but not the next meeting, when the society was officially formed. But he has been involved in the society since that very first

meeting and, therefore, has every right to claim to be a founding member.

When the president spoke to Jim recently over this matter, Jim said he clearly remembered being invited to that very first meeting by convenor Doug Baker, who was destined to become the inaugural president. At that time, Jim had only recently arrived in Perth from the eastern states.

Our biggest gig yet!

ALL is ready for the biggest event we have yet held at Balcatta, the 12th annual Sandgroppers Gathering, incorporating the 6th Steam Traction Engine Rally. Final numbers for dinner on the Saturday night are 60, with about 100 registrations in all.

The event will open on the Friday afternoon for those wishing to unload their locos at the club. There will be security arrangements in place for the Friday and Saturday nights. The gates will be open at 8am on Saturday and Sunday and those who have volunteered to go on the roster should ensure they are there at the allocated times.

The Saturday night dinner will start at 6pm, with the meals served by a chef from WA Spit Roasts in buffet style. There will be no lengthy speeches, just a short welcome to our guests.

Start made on garden railway project?

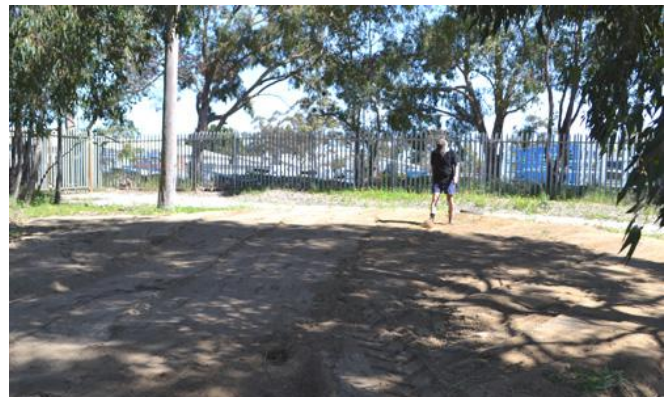
THE "Serpentiners" combined in September to take the first positive steps in creating a garden railway by levelling off a "mountain" of soil at the rear of the block. Dave Robinson used a tractor belonging to his daughter Sharon's partner, Harry Roser (both of Serpentine), to level out soil transferred from the top of the tunnel during recent work to seal off water seepages in the tunnel roof.



Dave gets to grips with one of the large mounds of earth.

On that occasion it was Harry who relocated the soil with his tractor. But this time around, Dave "borrowed" Harry's Massey-Ferguson to prepare the area for the garden railway project, which is being spearheaded by John Turney.

The soil-levelling assignment was undertaken in a relatively short time, bisected by morning tea with the Tuesday work crew.



Job done: Dave checks out his efforts.

The other side of Dave Robinson

NEW committee member Dave Robinson is a “jack of all trades” and this was very much on display at the Perth Royal Show recently.

As he has done for many years, Dave was one of the mainstays of the Animal Nursery, bringing with him many animals from his family “farm”, including goats and kids, dogs and puppies and daughter Sharon’s cow Ella and her



three-month old calf.

Dave’s involvement was very much interactive, milking and feeding his goats and he is pictured here doing just that.

He also slept on the job, dossing down in a sleeping bag in the office for the duration of the show, plus a couple of days before and after.

The pictures were supplied by daughter Sharon.



From moggies to belles of the ball!

A FERAL moggy is a feral moggy, right? WRONG, just ask Harry Roser, who has revealed a side to his character other than miniature railways.

As Cinderella was transformed from a wretched kitchen girl into a beautiful belle of the ball, so too were Harry’s moggies turned into true feline champions – with sashes and rosettes to prove it.

Harry found the two female ginger feral kittens in a waste bin at the Kewdale factory where he worked, so took them home and, with the help of partner Sharon, hand fed them.

Come the next Perth Royal Show, Harry decided to test his felines against the best – and came up trumps. And he has continued to collect championships at the following three “royals”.

This year his now prized cats picked up reserve best cat in Section 1 and best cat in section 2, collecting \$300 in prize money.



He has won awards at each of the last four royal shows and last year his prize money tallied nearly \$500 – not bad for two feral kittens!

But it hasn’t been a one-way income

stream with the cats, for six months ago both were bitten by a dugite. Harry rushed them to the vet, who gave them antivenin, and they survived, but not before Harry and Sharon parted with \$3500 — \$1000 for treatment for each of the cats and \$1500 for the vet hospital bill. And that was with a discount!

The snake, however, was not so fortunate, Harry made sure of that.

Last year the lighter coloured of the two cats won the judges award for best cat in show, awarded by Jenny Seaton of Curtin Radio.

There was some initial confusion over the sex of the kittens, with the vet saying one was a male, but when they were de-sexed, both were found to be females.

Harry just missed out on election to the NDMES committee on October 9, but Sharon’s father, Dave Robinson, was elected.



Harry proudly displays sashes and rosettes won by Garfield and Monkey at this year’s Perth Royal Show.

Coming to grips with boiler construction

ONE of the most important elements of our “branch” of model engineering is boiler construction. It’s not easy, requiring a degree of skill, determination and perseverance.

After all, the boiler is all-important, for it is the boiler which provides the steam power to propel the locomotive.

To give members a better understanding of what’s involved in boiler construction, Steve Reeves has been hosting brazing days at his Parkwood home every weekend since the beginning of October.

Phill, Steve and Rob Otway have been building three 7¼” gauge Juliets, with slight variations, and boilers for these have been constructed at the brazing days. Other boilers have also been built.

Pictured here are some photos taken at the brazing days, with boiler inspectors Phill Gibbons and Steve being central to the work undertaken.



Phill Gibbons brazes the inner firebox stays while Rob keeps the outside hot.



Above: Rob Otway brazing fire box stays.

Left: Phill brazes the backhead to the boiler shell while Rob keeps the unit hot .



We’re now all lit-up for Sandgropers

THE lights are on under the patio roof!

After two full days working on the project in mid-October, maintenance electrician Jaco De Lange has the lights installed and working (in between FIFO work in the Pilbara) and has provided a two-pin external power outlet on the clubhouse wall under the awning.

The lighting is needed for the Sandgropers Saturday night dinner, which will be held under cover on the patio. The new power outlet will provide sufficient power for the coffee urn, percolator, etc, to be used for morning and afternoon tea at Sandgropers — as well as for the dinner itself. This obviates the need for extension leads from the canteen, which was necessary for our 30th birthday run and the invitation run held last year.

While trying not to single out Jaco for work he has undertaken, as up to 20 members regularly attend working bees on Tuesdays and Saturdays, he alone provides us with expertise in an area which would be costly if outside electricians were engaged.

His work is being supported by Steve Hawkins, an electrical contractor and friend of the president, who is signing off on Jaco’s work.

Jaco has now completed lighting projects in the steam-up shed and patio and hopes to have a new lighting system in the station area soon.



The patio lights are switched on for the first time on October 15.

An idyllic day at the office

THE weather threatened, but the October public run day on October 25 turned out to be one of those idyllic days – a nice little earner, eight party reservations plus blow-ins, plenty of hands on deck to help out and, above all, a day to savour.

Our job was made that little bit easier by an influx of about six CMR members, who used the run to familiarise themselves with the track ahead of the Sandgropers Gathering.

Just about all the CMR visitors also took advantage of the relaxed atmosphere to help out with the driving.

As we had plenty of qualified guards, we also trialed a three-car train, hauled by the orange club diesel loco. It worked well in reducing passenger wait time. Trains of three carriages or more have to have a qualified guard at the rear.

There was also a prospective new member from Rockingham.

It was pleasing to see many members wearing their new club t-shirts and Brenton and Mary England, who arranged their manufacture in the Philippines, also brought along a jacket with the club logo woven on front and back, for display. These will also be available for inspection at Sandgropers and orders taken. Here are some pictures from the day:



With guard Dave Edmunds waving the green flag at the rear, Tanya Macarthur gets the first official three-car train away from the station behind Dave Robinson's yellow Westrail diesel.



Harrison Mills (CMR) brings Steve Reeves' gas-fired 5" Blowfly into the station.



Luke Mills (CMR) waits for clearance into the station with the club diesel loco.



CMR committeeman Clive Woodward enters the station driving the club steam loco, watched by a bemused Steve Reeves.



Steve Reeves' battery loco "Ocker" got plenty of rail time. Here it waits to enter the station, driven by Dylan Audrain (CMR).

A day at the office (cont...)



What a poser! As soon as Steve Briggs saw the camera, on went the brakes for a posed shot with Klipspringer. And his passengers were in the act, too!



This picture exemplified the relaxed nature of the October run day.

848km round trip to try out loco!

STEVE McAllister drove the 424km from Geraldton to our track on Sunday, September 12, tried out his recently completed 5" diesel-outline loco at the club run day, liked what he saw and immediately fired in a membership registration form!

Then he drove the 424km back home.

Steve was thrilled to give his loco a run on the ground level track and, as the first 5" loco to run on the GLT for some time, experienced no problems whatsoever.

While Geraldton has a miniature railway society, the Batavia Coast Miniature Railway, it is solely for 7¼" locos.

So Steve becomes our second long distance member to join our ranks in as many weeks. The other is Lyndsay Wyles of Kalgoorlie.

The club run day also saw Wayne Dunn continue to get to know his nice little green "Atlantic" 4-4-2 (Maisie) while Jaco de Lange is coming to grips with his 7¼" tank loco Bridget, with wife Ronel going along for the ride.

Polly was there, as usual, with Richard Turner smiling broadly at one stage as he pushed an out-of-breath Maisie up the bank and into the station on the raised level track.

Right: Stephen McAllister's 5" co-co diesel Waterloo on the loader.

Below: Stephen (right) and a travel companion load up Waterloo for the trip back to Geraldton.



Polly to the rescue! Richard Turner helps Wayne Dunn and an out-of-breath Maisie up the bank and into the station for a blow-up.



Jaco De Lange passes through the station driving his little green 0-4-2 Bridget, with wife Ronel and boiler inspector Steve Reeves in tow.

Despite the omens...

THE omens were plain to see for the September public running day, with no birthday bookings, competition from Perth Royal Show and a BIG weekend of football in town, but the day provided plenty for us to feel satisfied about.

There was a steady stream of people beating a path to our doors, who were capably handled by the 15 members present. All three club locos were in use at certain stages.

Among the four visitors from the miniature railway fraternity present (one from Scotland), two indicated they would like to join our ranks – and followed this up with membership applications. Here are some of the pics taken on the day by John Shugg and Andy Davies:



Left: The train you are waiting for on platform 2 has just left platform 1! Young new member Meldon Bruce-Hall chats to station master John Shugg as a sizeable queue waits for the next train.



Left: The smile says it all! Steve Briggs had a great day behind Klipspringer.

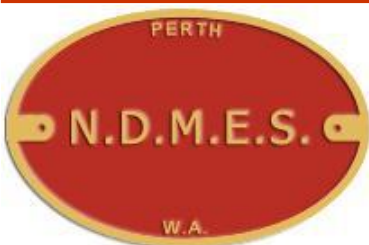


Above: Ken and Andrew Manning attend to the "bendy track" traverser.

Below: Andrew with a Scottish visitor, who donated \$50 to the club as thanks for our hospitality.



Right: Damien's new loco parked in the steam-up bay after making a successful first public appearance.



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