



Ron 'lost for words' during tankard presentation!

IT'S not very often we see Ron Collins lost for words, but that was the pleasurable sight (!) for about a dozen members at a boiler day at Ron's Parkerville premises on October 19.

Ron has been opening up his expansive workshop every Wednesday for NDMES members to hone their boiler-making skills and boiler inspector Phill Gibbons and Richard Turner decided this should not continue without some form of special recognition.

So Phill came up with the idea of a special "silver" tankard and Richard offered to go hunting on the Internet for the components needed. What Phill had in mind was something unique, such as a tankard equipped with a pressure gauge and water sight glass, to show Ron the members' gratitude and that he was not being taken for granted.

The pressure and water gauges are new and in working order. In fact, the water gauge is a Blackgates 3 cock type. Phill, who made the presentation, posed the question: What do you get for someone who has everything? Well, how's about a beer tankard with its own pressure and water gauges?

"When I made the presentation, Ron was speechless for just about the first time in his life," Phill said." Of course, he had no idea of what was going to happen."

"Ron's generosity is galvanising a lot of members, regenerating a lot of interest in miniature locomotive construction.

"This token of our appreciation for his generosity now has a



Above: What the heck is this? Ron Collins seems somewhat bemused as he opens the box presented to him by Phill Gibbons (at left).

Right: A close-up of Ron's unique tankard.

Pictures: Bill Walker



prominent place in his workshop."

"It must also be said that without Ron's generosity, my big copper boiler would not have been built."

And also thanks to Ron's generosity, NDMES members have access to arguably the best miniature boiler workshop in Australia and at least 10 boilers are currently in various stages of construction there.

**A double-page centre spread on the boiler workshop appears on pages 6 and 7 of this newsletter.*

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New locos make for a vibrant society

IT is a clear sign of a vibrant and progressive society when we have new locos built by our own members taking to our tracks. And that has been very evident at our last two club run days.

This, in turn, adds to the value of these days: The birth of new locos being steamed up and running for the first time.

Ed Brown's Es WAGR 5" Pacific made its first foray on to the track after several hiccups at the September club run day. Paul Costall, who had the pleasure of driving the loco, said the only problem related to the vacuum brakes, otherwise the loco "ran like a sewing machine"!

"This was the loco's second steaming at the club and we ran for about three hours. Ed is now confident about taking it to the club and also to Sandgropers in November," Paul said.

"Ed's attention to detail is amazing. The engine was built from original works drawings and photos from the Battye Library."

President's Report



by Tom Winterbourn

With the engine complete, it is a feather in Ed's cap – and it also marks a milestone in having a "large" 5" loco using the ground level track (*see article on page 8*).

The other new loco to feature at the October club run was Phill Gibbons 7¼" Juliet 0-4-0 which, after some initial injector problems and a troublesome water gauge, ran well. It was an impressive debut for a brand new loco.

Phill's loco is one of three Juliets built conjointly with those of Rob Otway and Steve Reeves. Rob's loco was also expected to make its public debut on the day, but was deferred until the Sandgropers weekend.

It was a creative construction project, with the three members of the group concentrating on building set components for all three locos.

While the three locos are unmistakably Juliets, each has its own distinguishing features. Phill's No 9 is a tender loco, Rob's is a side tank and Steve's is a saddle tank with the wheelbase extended 3 inches. They all have Baker valve gear.

Phill built the three chassis, Steve the boilers and a lot of the boiler fittings while Rob built the riding cars and did all the laser cutting. Each assembled and painted his own loco.

Steve's loco has a superheater while the other two are wet-steamers.



Left: The way ahead ... 12-year-old Mark Bowring watches intently as Andrew Manning passes on some brazing tips as they work on Mark's Rob Roy in Andrew's workshop.



Phill (at right) gets plenty of help firing up his new Juliet for the first time from Richard Turner and Clive Chapman.

Calendar of Forthcoming Events

General Meeting	Friday	18 November	8:00 pm	
Club Run Day	Sunday	20 November	9:00 am — 2:00 pm	
Public Run Day	Sunday	27 November	10:00 am — 2:00 pm	
Christmas Lunch and Run	Sunday	11 December	9:00 am — 2:00 pm	(including a short General Meeting)
General Meeting	Friday	13 January 2017	8:00 pm	

Things you need to know

Sign the attendance book when you're at the club

At the October club run day, there was an incident which had the potential to be serious. It wasn't and all is well. However, a check on the sign-in book for that day revealed a number of members had not registered their attendance.

Had a member who had not signed in been involved in a serious incident, the insurance implications could be horrendous.

So, as soon as you arrive at the club for a run day, work day or whatever, please sign the attendance book and save yourself and the club potential embarrassment and expensive litigation. It is your responsibility and duty as a member of the society to do so.

Pre-Christmas cheer with Men's Shed

MEMBERS of the Tuesday crew – and others who may be available – have been invited to the Stirling Men's Shed for a pre-Christmas morning tea on Tuesday, December 6, at 10am.

The last time there was a "coming together" of our two organisations, about a couple of years ago, it was the Men's Shed which visited us. So please make a note in your diary for this Christmas get-together with our neighbours.

Members' Christmas wind-up party

The members' Christmas wind-up party is planned to take place at the scheduled club running day, Sunday, December 11, at the club grounds. We have a few new ideas this year to make the event more family-friendly.

Special school holiday public runs in January

NDMES members at their October meeting approved a plan to run school holiday trains on Tuesdays during January. They will be operated by the Tuesday crew, with Cathy also offering to come along and look after the ticket sales.

The runs will be on January 10, 17 and 24. It is planned to run these trains clockwise to get an idea of how this would work on a public run day, as crowds are not expected to be big during the school holidays. The public run on January 29 will revert to anti-clockwise running.

Sausage sizzlers required for H&F sale

NDMES has again been asked to run the BBQ at Hare & Forbes big sale at its new Kewdale warehouse on November 18-20. H&F is planning a much bigger event than previously, with several other displays, including cars. It is hoped we can again put together a display, with a traction engine or three. A roster is now being drawn up for members to run the BBQ.

Traction engines strut their PR stuff

THEY don't have much application at our public running days at Balcatta, but the traction engines of Ron Collins and Paul Costall are in a class of their own when it comes to promoting our society at other functions.

Recently, Paul had his showman's engine at the Bunning's BBQ at Balcatta (pictured in the last Steam Lines), then in late September they were both at the Serpentine Air Show — top photo at right shows Ron Collins with his engine.

They have been attending this function for a number of years and on this latest occasion, spent most of the day driving around the airfield taking passengers for a ride. What an incongruous sight – ancient and modern! They attracted a fair crowd of all ages and answered a broad range of questions.

Also assisting was Keith de Graauw, who had a great time driving Ron's traction engine and ferrying around interested passengers.

Their latest gig was at the WA Railfest 2016 on October 8, when they strutted their stuff around the historic locos at the Bassendean Railway Museum. The photo at lower right shows Paul and his "showman" in front of the museum exhibits.

At all three events, considerable interest was shown in the traction engines – by younger people who have never seen them in day-to-day operation and by older people taking a trip down memory lane.

Pics by Keith De Graauw



Give springs the attention they deserve

THERE is one key element of loco construction which, perhaps, doesn't get the focus and attention it deserves – springing.

It is very important we get this right, because this can be the difference between good traction and a loco being “light on its feet”.

When you do get it right, not only will traction improve, but wheel wear will also be more even.

I will deal with my own O&K 0-6-0 first. Because our home track at Balcatta is so good, I decided to go for neoprene synthetic rubber blocks for suspension, generally because they work OK and are quick to make and fit.

Then, after a little thought, I decided to change to springs. I fitted one per axlebox, but soon began to wonder how they could be adjusted.

Third time lucky, they say, and the loco is now fitted with double springs per axlebox and they are adjustable.

The springs are out of sight and out of mind, but they can be responsible for success or failure of many a loco.

Perhaps the easy way to calculate the required springing is to put your loco on scales, axle by axle, and purchase springs to balance that weight, or even out that weight with a little lead.



Engineering Matters
with boiler inspector
Phill Gibbons

While working for a company which made miniature locos commercially, we used to put some kitchen scales on the ground under the front and rear beams, put a jack on the scales and then pump the jack. When it stopped winding up the scales, you have your correct weight to give to the spring winders.

This always worked OK for us and the locos had a great reputation for good passenger hauling, with very little wear from year to year.

All of those members who have driven the club steam loco in recent years will remember the deplorable state of the wheels before they were re-profiled. This, I believe, was caused by having no suspension. The springs had been removed and blocks of steel had been welded in the free space in the horns.

At our Balcatta track, a loco with good springing will have superior traction starting a train on the gradient out of the station than a loco on which springing has been of secondary importance.

So, I suggest you pay particular attention to the springs when building your loco and then, when it is in operation after completion, you check your springs from time to time!

Know your Society

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Help needed with John's Heidi

WITH a growing young family and a full order book at his factory, we haven't seen much of John Wilson lately.

You may recall about two years ago John bought the Heidi "Zambezi", since renamed "Romana" after his wife, but while the loco was in excellent condition, he never really overcame water flow problems. So he took it home with the intention of sorting out the problem – and then came the pressure with family commitments and his business. John has now reluctantly decided to sell the Heidi, but wants help in sorting out the waterworks, particularly the pump.

Here's the deal: If a club member offers to help and sorts out the problem, he will receive 15 per cent of a successful offer to purchase. Then again, I guess John would also consider offers for the loco "as is". So, there it is.

Give John a ring or send him an email to discuss. Contact details can be provided by a committee member as he would rather we not publish these in this newsletter, which is distributed to other WA clubs and interstate.



In March, 2015, John is seated at the controls while boiler inspectors Steve Reeves and Phill Gibbons look on.

A Bulldog to revive GWR memories

MEMBERS are being given the opportunity to create for themselves a little bit of Great Western Railway nostalgia in the form of a 5" William Dean designed double outside frame 4-4-0.

The Bulldogs were introduced in the late 19th century and served the railway well for just over half a century. The class, with their 5ft 8in driving wheels, were used on passenger services throughout the GWR. The first was built in 1898 and the last examples were condemned in 1949. Of the 141 built, 20 were rebuilt from earlier Duke class locos.

Father and son Christopher and Ben Jones have approached the club to see if any member would make a realistic offer for the Bulldog, part-built by their father and grandfather, Welshman Maxwell Gethin Jones, who was a York (WA) GP in the '80s and '90s.

Ben said his grandfather always had a keen interest in steam, often building tabletop boilers powering rudimentary engines. He then moved on to electric O gauge trains and built quite a few of these.

"I feel he wanted to take his hobby and passion to the next level ... to combine his passion for steam and trains while also moving to a larger scale of train, which was easier to work on considering his diminishing eyesight," Ben said.

"The Bulldog was part-built from articles in the Model Engineer, issue 3579 vol. 144 to issue 3683 vol. 148 (1978-1982). However, because of working in a shed which amplified the heat during the hot summers, plus his busy working life, it took him between 12 and 15 years to get the Bulldog to the rolling chassis stage."

Unfortunately, due to health issues, he was unable to complete the loco. He died in August, 1999, aged 79.

Ben said he only had one of the blueprint sheets out of 25, but these were still available for purchase.

The asking price is \$3,500 so, if interested, why not make an offer?

See Tom for further details and contact info.



Christopher and Ben Jones with the GWR Bulldog they have for sale. The tender is complete and is hidden by the loco!

LEARNING THE ART OF BOILER

IN many ways, we really are the lucky club! With an excellent clubhouse, courtesy of some hard work by some of our long-standing members, great track and facilities, possibly the largest membership among our fraternity in WA and many willing hands to help out when needed.

But there's more to it than that. There's the generosity of some of our members in term of "time and space".

Ron Collins has done much for the society over the years, particularly when he was "in business" in Mt Helena.

He's now in retirement, sort of, but he is providing access to workshop facilities at his new home in Parkerville for those members pursuing the very essence of our society – model engineering.

Every Wednesday morning, he has been throwing open his spacious and very well-equipped workshop to allow members to build their own boilers under the expert guidance of boiler inspector Phill Gibbons.

Currently there are 10 boilers in various stages of completion.

Boiler-making is not easy – never was. But with the expert help and ample facilities, many members are now taking on a project once considered too difficult.

The weekly sessions usually attract between 10 and 12 members and newcomers like Keith de Graauw are learning much about brazing and silver soldering boilers.

Some of the work undertaken recently included the bronze brazing of the firebox for Phill's own Orstein & Koppel 7¼" compound, further work on Andrew Manning's vertical boiler for his Caradoc steam tractor, and Paul James' freelance quarter-scale traction engine.

The boiler barrel for Keith De Graauw's new Phantom 7¼" 2-6-0 has been silver soldered and work has continued on Ron's own Wombat. Phill has also recently completed his 7¼" Juliet.

Here are a selection of pics taken at a couple of the recent sessions:



Ron's spacious workshop.



Clive Chapman and Les Harris apply extra heat as Phill Gibbons silver solders inside the firebox.



Above: Ron's Wombat smokebox, spark arrestor, frames and wheels (five? - one is for the steering wheel!)



Left: Richard Turner and John Turney, who, along with Stan Armstrong and Paul James, are building vertical boilers.

CONSTRUCTION AT PARKERVILLE



Ron provides extra heat as Phill undertakes silver soldering on the Wombat boiler, watched by Clive Chapman.



Phill Gibbons gives Paul James a hand with the boiler barrel for his freelance traction engine.



Ron raises the 6" Wombat boiler after a short time in the sulphuric acid bath.

Right: Keith de Graauw silver solders the boiler of his Phantom 2-6-0, watched by Phill Gibbons while Richard Turner (partly hidden) applies extra heat.



Left: An excellent view of the stays above and on the sides of Wombat's firebox.
Right: Phill and Ron check for any missed joints or possible leaks.



Recycling copper tubes from a disused boiler.

Ed breaks new ground with his Es Pacific

IT'S been a long time coming, but the GLT 5" track was graced by Ed Brown's new WAGR Es Pacific No. 302 at the September club run.

Apparently, the loco went very well on its first big steaming, the only problem being with the vacuum brakes. But the problem was diagnosed and now the inlet needs to be enlarged to allow the brakes to release.

Paul Costall said apart from that, the engine "ran like a sewing machine"!

"This was the second run at the club and we ran for about three hours and Ed is now confident about taking it to the club and also to Sandgropers in November," he said.

Ed started building the loco several years ago, alongside an identical loco being built by John Hagarty, who recently re-joined the club. They used to work together at the WA Government Railways.

Both boilers had problems with leaks so about four years ago Ron and Paul helped Ed fix the problem.

"There have been numerous sessions over two years to fix it, but finally we got there," Paul said. "However, John's engine is still not finished."



Is that a contented pose? Ed Brown has steam to spare as he rests in the station.

During the course of the loco's construction, Ron and Paul have cut and machined some parts, usually parts too big for Ed's Hercus lathe. But Ed, and John, have done most of the work.

"Ed's attention to detail is amazing," Paul said. "The engine was built from original works drawings and photos from the Battye Library."

The loco's completion is not only a feather in Ed's cap, but it also marks a milestone for the club in having a "large" 5" loco using the GLT.

All pics by John Shugg.



Les Harris looks on as Ed steams up his new loco.



Clive Jarman was also impressed with the loco. In the above photo he poses in the station with Ed.

Left: Paul Costall has his eye on the gauges as he coasts down towards the tunnel.



Excellent patronage at our public runs

THE September and October runs were well patronised by the public despite the former being blighted by a poor weather forecast.

We were also down on three regular member locos in September, so three of the four club locos (not the battery loco) were pressed into service.

The day started with heavy rain with no hint of sunshine, but an hour or so later the sun was high in the sky and our day was completed in glorious weather. With five birthday parties booked (one was a no-show), there was just a trickle of visitors to start with, but then almost a flood when the weather picked up. In fact, such was the demand for rides that a quarter of an hour before our scheduled finish, visitors were queued back up to and on the overbridge. But some late running ensured all who wanted a ride were accommodated.

It also turned out to be a relatively good day, income wise.

Dave Campbell from Christchurch (NZ), a member of the Canterbury Society of Model and Experimental Engineers, dropped in and promised to be back for the 2018 AALS convention in Bunbury.

With spring very much in the air, crowds flocked to our October run, with no fewer than nine birthday parties. It was the best grossing run for some time. Queues for rides were down the ramp into the picnic grounds for much of the day.

The lack of carriages was very evident but this should be overcome with the two carriages part-made by Ken Austin due to roll out of the Ron Collins workshops for the November run. The run also marked the commissioning of the tunnel approach signalling for both the raised track and GLT, set up by Ron Casotti. Here is a selection of pics taken at both runs:



"PJ" waves to the camera as he brings Bushfly up the gradient and into the station at the October run.



With smoke up his nostrils, Paul Costall is an unusual sight on a GLT steamer.



Left: Kiwis together: Christchurch visitor David Campbell with John Shugg at the September run.

Right: Andrew Manning gets away from the station driving Bushfly.



Clive Chapman and Andy Davis again had the BBQ food well organised.



Steve Briggs is about to enter the tunnel driving the club steam loco at the October run.



Right: Foundation member Jim Crawford gets smoke and oil through his veins again in September.



New locos pass the scrutiny test!

FOR a variety of reasons, the club runs in September and October were interesting and attracted a good number of members and locos.

On September 11, Ed Brown fired up his 5" WAGR Es Pacific and for the first time and had a satisfying run, with various other members also giving the loco a shake-down — see article on page 8.

Young Mark Bowring also got some time driving the 0-6-0T Evelyn, owned by Noeline Langford and maintained by Andrew Manning.

At the October club run on October 16, there was another new loco in steam — Phill Gibbons' 7¼" Juliet 0-4-0. After some initial injector problems, the loco took to the tracks and performed well — see photo on page 2.

"Renewed" member Stu Martyn ran the Speedy 0-6-0 "Speedy Gonzales" he built about 15 years ago and this also performed well.

Here is a selection of pics taken at both club run days:



Clive Jarman and the 3½" Acton Burnell Hall (Oct).



Andrew Manning (with John Shugg) gave Dennis Lord's 3½" Maisie a run, but blower problems didn't help steaming!



Scott Andrews driving his diminutive Rob Roy (September).



Phill and his new Juliet (Oct).



Above right: Stu Martyn blows the cobwebs off "Speedy Gonzales" with Steve Briggs in tow (Oct).



Left: Happiness is Mark Bowring driving Evelyn (Sept).



Right: Jaco de Lange was happy to be back in September driving Bridget.

Show & Tell presentations

THE Show & Tell segments at our monthly general meetings continue to highlight our very reason for existing – our model engineering heritage. Here are photos taken of presentations at the September and October meetings.

At the September meeting, Ron Collins showed progress made on his Wombat. He pointed out there was an extra driving wheel and, tongue in cheek as usual, wondered if Andrew thought it was for a steering wheel?

Also at the September meeting, Phill Gibbons showed jigs he had made for drilling and shaping side rods, and Andrew Manning showed progress on his Tich boiler.

At the October meeting, Keith de Graauw showed formers he had made for the copper boiler for his Phantom. These are made from chipboard and wood and are available to other members building a similar boiler. Also at the October meeting, Phill Gibbons showed the coupling rods for his latest project and demonstrated how they were made. Damien Outram showed his garden railway Aristo diesel locomotive and wagon at the October meeting. *All pics Tom Winterbourn*



Ron Collins showing his Wombat with the extra wheel.



Right: Phill Gibbons demonstrates jigs for side rod manufacture.



Left: Andrew Manning with his Tich boiler.



Right: Keith de Graauw with his wooden boiler formers.



Below left: Damien Outram and his garden railway loco.

Below right: Phill Gibbons with completed coupling rods



Harry wins again with his ginger moggies



Harry Roser

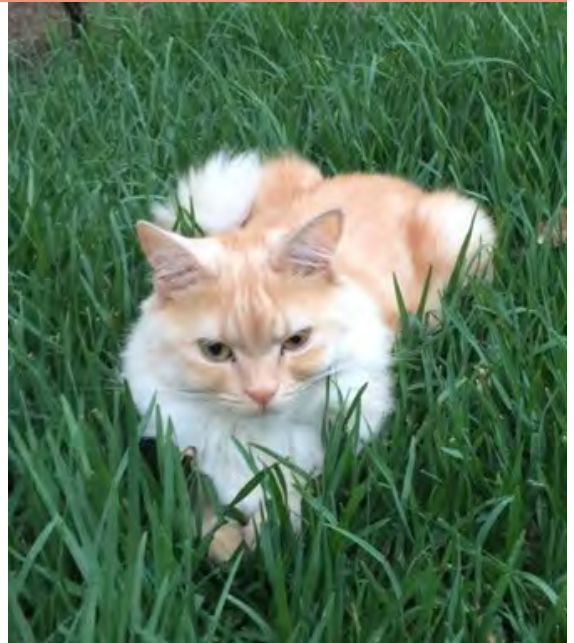
HARRY Roser and partner Sharon Robinson have made their mark again in the cat section at the recent Perth Royal Show.

They're making a habit of picking up awards with two fluffy ginger balls of fur that started life in a waste bin on a Kewdale industrial site. Harry took pity on the small wild moggies and, with Sharon's help, hand-fed them. They are now entrenched family members.

The cats have won awards at each of the last five royal shows and last year they picked up reserve best cat in Section 1 and best cat in section 2, collecting \$300 in prizemoney. Prizemoney two years ago was \$500, when Monkey won the judge's award for best cat in show.

This year, Garfield (the dark ginger) won 2nd in her class and sister Monkey won best cat in section 2 in her section, then the ribbon for reserve best pet cat in show.

Eighteen months ago, both Garfield and Monkey almost succumbed to a dugite bite. They were saved after a dash to the vet — and an outlay of \$3,500!



Monkey, reserve best pet cat in show.

Truly a toy for the big boys!

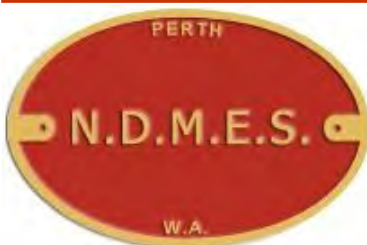
Sorry guys, you've missed out. A cool \$US245,000 would have bought you this nice little number, but it's been snapped up by Tauranga Model Marine and Engineering Society of New Zealand member Shane Marshall. In any case, there might have been a problem or two getting it on to the unloader, not to mention the turntable and the tight curve thereafter.

Whether you're a devotee of US, British, European or Australia/NZ outlines, you've got to admit this is a superb piece of model engineering. The Union Pacific Big Boy was built to the USA 7½" gauge, but Shane is re-gauging it to 7¼" gauge. Our thanks to John Shugg for sending on this little story, as printed in the Auckland Society of Model Engineers' April, 2016, "Micrometer" Newsletter.



BIG BOY FOR SALE: US\$245,000!

Image: Extract from the Auckland Society of Model Engineers April 2016 "Micrometer".



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