



Newsletter of THE PALMERSTON NORTH MODEL ENGINEERING CLUB INC

Managers of the "MARRINER RESERVE RAILWAY"
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TRACK RUNNING

This is held on the FIRST and THIRD Sunday of each month, from 1 pm to 4 pm Summer and 1 pm to 3 pm during the Winter. All club members are welcome to attend and help out with loco coaling, watering and passenger marshalling - none of the tasks being at all onerous.

Visiting club members too, are always welcome at the track, at the monthly meeting, or if just visiting and wishing to make contact with members, please phone one of the above office bearers.

Sender:-
PNMEC
22b Haydon St,

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Coming Events

Coming Events: Monthly Meeting; This will be held on the 24 July at 7.30 pm in the Hearing Association Rooms, Church Street, Palmerston North.

The third of the Workshop Practice - "Marking Out" Talks by Richard Lockett. Maurice Brownell will speak of his experiences with crawler tractors. 'Bits and Pieces'.

Mid Week Run at Marriner Reserve Railway : 26 August, between 10 am and 2 pm. Please contact Doug Chambers beforehand.

Track running at Marriner Reserve Railway:

3 rd August	1- 3 pm
17 th August	1- 3 pm

Open Weekends :

New Plymouth	Labour Weekend
Havelock North	Labour Weekend 71/4" gauge.

The closing date for the next issue of The Generator is Friday 15th August

REPORT of the JUNE MEETING

A cold night but a good turn out of members. Richard Lockett gave a brief talk ,(Part 2 of the “How To” series) on the sharpening of twist drills. There were some varied items among the Bring, Buy, Sell and Exchange. Although it appeared that many of us had decided to retain all our treasures and refrain from acquiring more.

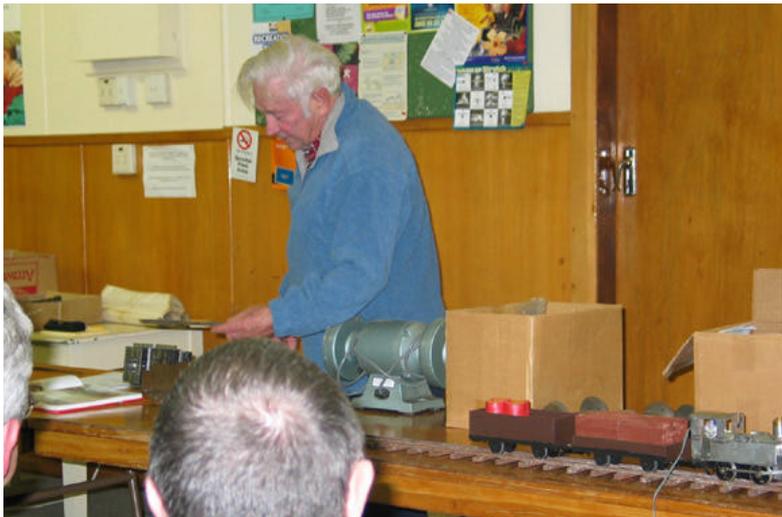
There was a varied collection of items displayed among the “Bits and Pieces”.

Fred Kent showed the progress he has made on the ‘Competition Crane’. Fred had brought along a small air compressor and the crane engine was demonstrated running on air pressure.

Murray Bold had his Gauge 1 NZR ‘D’ class locomotive. Powered by an electric motor, Murray demonstrated the loco’s performance on a short



Richard explaining how to sharpen a drill.



Don Dudley telling the members about the models he brought along. Murray Bold’s NZR “D” in the foreground.

Don Dudley showed us the chassis’s for a live steam Gauge 1 and a live steam O gauge loco. The Gauge 1 was a ‘Dot’ designed by LBSC.

length of track. Buffer stops on the track would have been handy as the loco at one stage headed for the end of the table to the horror of the onlookers.

Bruce Geange displayed the steam crane that he is building. The jib is now rigged and as we have come to expect from models produced by Bruce, it is looking very realistic and complex.

Chris Rogers displayed the cylinders that he is machining out of Flo-cast bar for his new 7 ¼” gauge loco.

It is an ‘Adams’ Radial tank of about 1885. The wheel arrangement is 4 – 4 – 2

JULY MEETING

Maurice Brownell will speak on his experiences driving crawler tractors.

Richard Lockett will continue the series of workshop practice.

This month it will be on ‘Marking out’.

‘Bits and Pieces’, progress on your current project.

LETTER FROM ENGLAND

By Stan Compton

For the last few weeks I have noticed a couple of eggshells, with faces painted on them, perched on two eggcups behind the sink bench. They are growing a lush green crop of hair; my wife explained from alfalfa seed planted in moist cotton wool. That name took me back to my childhood and the films on Saturday afternoon, the rowdy patrons kept in check by an ex-army sergeant who patrolled up and down the aisles until the program started.

Does anyone remember “Our Gang” This depicted the adventures of a group of children living in a typical American small town. “Alfalfa” was a lanky, cross-eyed white boy, there was a small coloured boy and I recall he had large eyes showing a lot of white. A cute little white girl with a large bow in her curly hair who seemed to tag along, not really wanted by the boys.

Their meetings were held in the basement of a house which like many of that era had a trap-door for depositing the fuel supplies into, usually timber off-cuts in country areas. This was their means of access, without parents knowing, into the backyard, an American term for a garden at the rear of a house. Access to the street was by pushing aside a loose fence paling. We had never seen such properties living in an English city, but looking back it seemed so innocent.

On a country life program on TV recently a man with a pipe and his terrier, asked where all the boys that used to be out on their bikes fishing for perch in all the small rivers etc? It seems that Playstation has taken over, yet I recall an incident a year or so ago while running a loco at Hereford two boys appeared over the fence. They had been fishing in the River Wye, which flows alongside our tracksite, they were lucky to be allowed out on their own on such a river. Nice boys, I offered them a ride, which pleased them immensely.

We have been watching a series on TV about our restored canals and a group of older men explained how twenty years before they started to restore the Stourbridge Canal north of Birmingham. This was against the wishes of the Waterways Authority, but they proceeded to form a group of volunteers who felt it was a pity to lose part of the heritage of our narrow canals. Early photographs showed some of the two thousand tons of silt and muck they removed by hand, even an old car was found in one of the locks!!! Now that canal is part of the extensive system that is useable again and a valuable part of the tourist scene.

We also saw an item where a group of tourists from Florida U.S.A. had hired a barge for a week on our canals but there big complaint was having to go out and buy raincoats. “We don’t need raincoats in Florida !” How about hurricanes, or don’t they count. They loved the flowers in the gardens they past on their tour. “We are going to grow flowers when we get back to Florida.” But their climate is not suited to flowers, our’s is.

A few weeks ago Anne came home and told me there were lots of motor-cyclists gathered outside our local sale-rooms, and she had seen an advert in our local paper that there was to be a sale of vintage motorcycles. By the time I got there all of the bikes were sold, not that I am in the market these days, and various lots of spares, books, etc. were going under the hammer. Looking at those bikes brought back a lot of memories of my youth, when although I had no money, I put a ten shilling deposit on a 1924 round tank 250cc BSA with no hope of finding the balance of nine pounds ten shillings. Foolishly I never went back to explain my situation. That was in 1941.

One bike at the sale was a 250 Panther made in 1938, I recall they cost twenty –eight pounds ten shillings new. A basic machine for getting to work on. I read recently that Britain had 1.8 million unemployed in that year and that low selling price was achieved by using mill-girls, who only needed showing how to assemble the machines for a low wage. As the woollen mills in Yorkshire were idle, any work was better than none, no doubt the services would have uniforms ordered, but that would have been cross-bred wools.

I have read about restoring old vehicles etc, but when I looked at a 1931 O.E.C. with a 500cc J.A.P. engine that was neglected and rusty, I would hate to tackle such a project but that is what will happen and it will cost plenty of money to bring it up to the standard of today. A very rare machine with a most unusual steering arrangement, their big snag was such a large turning circle.

Our son who lives in Wellington, sent us a photograph recently of his family having a ride on the 7 ¼" track on the Petone foreshore. Nice to know the track is still in use, the locomotive at the head of their train appeared to be a NZR 2 –6 –2 tank, sorry I can't give the name of the driver or builder as my son didn't think to ask ! It looked very well built, so nice to know that some men are still building models in New Zealand. Palmerston North has a larger turn out than Hereford which has over eighty members, yet very few of them build anything.

I was reading a magazine in our doctor's surgery recently. It was about Nature and Wildlife and in it was an advert for a soft hat, the kind worn by Safari leaders in Africa. In this case worn by an elephant trainer in an English Zoo. One of his elephants had a habit of stealing his hat and eating it !! Not to worry, just wait a day or so and the hat will reappear in the dung, just wash it and it is as good as new. Three times this has happened and the makers claimed they produce a first-class product. Where does one buy an elephant to go with the new hat ?

PALMERSTON NORTH MODEL ENGINEERS CLUB SHIRTS

There are three shirts left of the original order of twenty-five. All 'large' size.
If you are interested please contact Cynthia Cooper or Richard Lockett.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2003-4 NOW DUE

Subs are due now. The good news is that once again there has been NO increase in the rate.

Members \$28 . 00

Country members and Juniors \$14 . 00

Pay direct to the Treasurer, Richard Lockett or post to him via the Society's address,
C/o 22 B Haydon Street,
Palmerston North.

FOR SALE

100 feet of 5 inch gauge track made up from 20 lengths each 5 feet long. May be set up as ground level track but stands are included to set the track up as a raised track.

Also, a twin-set passenger trolley. Suitable for raised track operation.

For price and further information Contact Les Fordyce 06 343 8565

WANTED

5" wagon, any condition-to remodel, reasonable running gear also, where can I get specs for a Drewery 0-6-0 loco E-mail Mark Mander at mr.cm@ihug.co.nz

WANTED

Attachments for an Emco-Unimat Lathe , Model SL.Live centre, fixed steady, mitre gauge assembly, milling table, fret/jigsaw, planeing attachment, circular saw, Raiser block, router, drive centre, and hand turning rests. Reply to P.O. Box 26, Feilding E-mail Michael Vincent at paratronics@xtra.co.nz

All these items are currently advertised on the club website.

ONE SAPPER'S WAR

By Bren Campbell

We were now based in a beautiful camp site in an olive grove with fourteen American technicians who maintained the locomotives and sixteen South African enginemen. There was excellent comradeship among us and life was idyllic. The north and south runs were right on the Mediterranean coast and we were given the superfluous advice to not permit any lighting that could be seen from the sea. Some of our rations were supplied by the South Africans, whose food we found rather poor, mainly the flavour of the meat.

The American food quickly lost its appeal because of its plastic pasty nature. The British supplies were more to the NZ palate but not necessarily to the tastes of the Americans and South Africans.

All sixteen South Africans were billeted in a large dormitory hut, while the Americans and us were accommodated in tents among the olive trees.

After four months in this idyllic part of the world the four married men of our group of New Zealanders, were recalled to base to prepare for furlough to New Zealand. We held a farewell party and gave those who lived close to our homes messages to our families. We remaining four single fellows carried on in apparent isolation but we were not forgotten and a week later in some urgency we were commanded to return to the furlough embarkation camp at Giza in the shadow of the Great Pyramids. Thus after a four day train journey we arrived, divested ourselves of everything we could not carry in our sea-going kitbags and four days later we were transported by road to Suez where we loaded onto the 37000 ton "Nieu Amsterdam".

At 1600 hours that day the anchor was weighed and the thirty day homeward journey began.

There were more than 6000 troops on board. We enjoyed three meals a day and those of us who gained possession of one of the seven hundred library books, read. A few of them were good and many were rubbish, but the possession of a book meant that one exchanged it person to person. There were frequent appeals over the ship's public address system for the return of all books to the library under the dire threat of no more issues. As the library was empty we did not fall for that one. They got them back at the end of the voyage.

We were billeted up on an enclosed weather deck in rather more comfort than we had experienced on the outward journey nearly three years before. We even enjoyed reacquainting ourselves with hammocks. After two days sailing down the Red Sea we put into Aden and lay at anchor for two days within the perimeter of volcanic peaks surrounding the great crater harbour. We were not allowed ashore and by the look of Aden and its barren surrounds the residents there were welcome to it. Mercifully we again steamed off across the Indian Ocean to pass off Columbo and head down the Australian West Coast. By day the ship travelled at modest speed and a straight course was followed. We travelled in convoy with other troop ships which included the 'Dominion Monarch' whose station was off our port beam. In some heavy weather we were to see her plough through waves cresting higher than her bridge superstructure. Frequently our escorting destroyers and light cruisers would turn off and disappear over the horizon and hours later or next morning they would be back in their normal stations. When we reached the Australian Coast the warships went off elsewhere and we were shadowed by Catalina amphibian aircraft whose crews we could see in their observation blisters.

We put into Freemantle for thirty-six hours and had twelve hours shore leave. Most of the troops went into Perth to spend the time and a very few of us inquired about train travel a little further inland and found a return service to Midlands Junction. Thus, following a dinner in a Perth restaurant we boarded an afternoon train to Midlands and spent a couple of hours there being shown over the Western Australian Railway Workshops. After some social beers we returned to Freemantle and the ship.

After completing provisioning the convoy set off down the coast, round the corner and across the Australian Bight and after a few days we put into Hobart. We passed in through the submarine barrier at the sea end of the deep entrance bay and sailed up that beautiful tree and farmland bordered waterway to the town backed by the snow capped Mt Wellington. We were there for six frustrating hours with no shore leave, before we set off again across the Tasman Sea for good old NZ. We came up from the south of Stewart Island and then up the East Coast of the South Island. The Dunedin contingent recognized the Otago Peninsular, but it was a murky day and we did not see any further sign of land until arriving in Wellington Harbour on the 12th July 1943 to the overwhelming pungent fragrance of bush and fern.

The Wellington and Hutt Valley troops were disembarked within a few hours of berthing, then the Auckland and South Island people later in the day. The Manawatu, Wanganui, Taranaki and Hawkes Bay troops were kept over until the following day. Adjoining our quarters was a large ship's orderly room, containing an extensive range of office equipment including thirty Remington typewriters. On the morning after our arrival only twenty-nine remained. What a witch hunt took place !! But they were looking at the wrong people. No doubt someone's secretarial requirements got off to a good start.

Those bound for Palmerston North were disembarked in the early afternoon and within three hours were back with our families.

The New Zealand railways were very short of staff due to war time pressures which was one of the reasons why the Government wanted the Railway Battalions back home rather than them being sent on to another theatre of war. Thus the companies were disbanded and the men returned to their jobs. I was retained for three months in the Army while under hospital treatment for my now very serious nervous disorder. The retention of food was an ongoing problem. I was eventually discharged on full war pension and unofficially warned that if I valued my pension, not to take up employment. Bad news for a 24 year old.

I went back to being a fireman on the railway but health problems made it impossible for me to carry on and after seven months I took up a job as a fitter and turner in a small workshop servicing district agricultural needs. I lost my pension. I completed my engineering apprenticeship and married my wartime correspondent and we raised two daughters.

I moved up through my trade to leading hand, foreman, works manager, then a change to secondary school teacher in technical subjects and finally middle management in a textile factory.

In the 1950s I built my own lathe and made a freelance 7 1/4" gauge oil-fired steam locomotive, two 7 foot riding trolleys and a portable track 210 feet long.

I developed a cottage industry in making turned wooden buttons for the wool spinning, knitting and weaving people. I found much interest in making specialised machinery for the production of a variety of wooden pieces such as weaving needles, bobbins and accessories.



In 1992 I completed a task that had been a dream for many years. This was the building of a steam car. It had a duplex engine with cylinders of 1.625" bore and 2" stroke. The piston valves were actuated by Hackworth/ Marshall valve gear. The mono tube steam generator deliver steam at up to a maximum 600psi.

It uses wood fuel and the forty litres of water carried on board permits two and a half hours steaming.

The Generator