



**Newsletter of THE PALMERSTON NORTH MODEL
ENGINEERING CLUB INC**

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March 2010

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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

Visiting club members 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,
Palmerston North

Place
stamp
here

This Months Featured Model

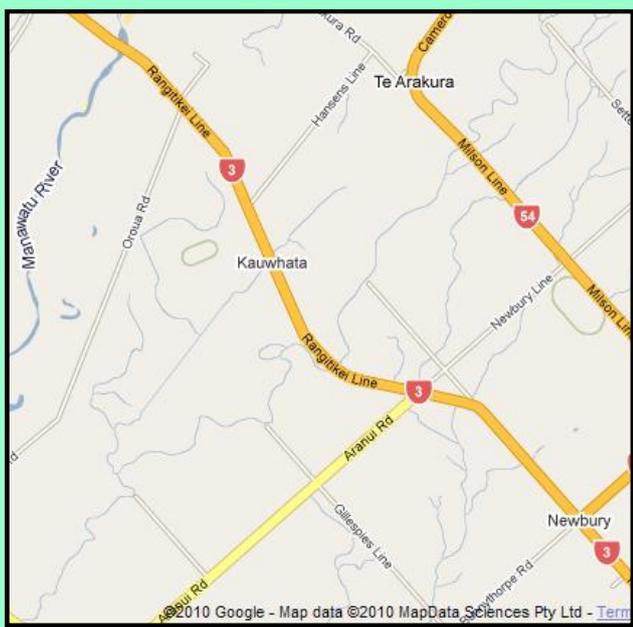


REPORT on the February Meeting.

A large turn out of members gathered at Feilding Steam Rail's depot. There we were divided into two groups, one group being shown through the carriage rebuilding facility by Mike Prior and the other shown over the locomotives by Mike Barnes and Stuart Anderson. Later the first group went to look over the locomotives and the other party were shown over the carriages by Mike Prior. We were able to inspect a visiting J class No 1211 of Mainline Steam that has been running trips while the Feilding Steam Rail's Wab has been undergoing repairs. We all understand the amount of work required to restore and maintain a steam railway locomotive, but the effort required to overhaul a carriage to mainline standards is daunting. One cannot fail to be impressed with the work that has been done by a team of volunteers.

Club Night 25 March 2010

A visit has been arranged to **Triple R Engineering Ltd**, Kauwhata Rangitikei Line, Palmerston North. On the left heading to Bulls. Please be ready for the tour by 7:20pm. Note robust footwear is essential.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This will be held on the 22nd April at 7.30pm in the Hearing Association Rooms, Church Street, Palmerston North.

It will be followed by Bits and Pieces with supper to follow.

All members are cordially invited to attend.

FOR SALE



Steve James has this Ew Loco and NZR 56ft Coach in 5" gauge for sale.

Details at www.ontherails.com
Contact Steve on 07 544 7177
or email steve@ontherails.com

COMING EVENTS

Mid Week Run at Marriner Reserve Railway

23rd March between 10.00 am and 2 pm
27th April between 10.00 am and 2 pm
Please contact Doug Chambers beforehand.

Track running at Marriner Reserve Railway

March 21st from 1pm to 4pm
April 4th from 1pm to 3pm
April 18th from 1pm to 3pm

Open Weekends

Havelock North Open Weekend
Easter weekend 2nd to 5th April

The closing date for the next issue of The Generator is Friday 9th April

Dub's 'A' locomotive in 'O' gauge

There were 14 of these little locos working for NZR from 1874 to 1905 when sold for private use to collieries, timber mills, freezing works and harbour boards. These locos did surprisingly good work on branch lines and shunting duties.

'O' gauge model.

While at a function in Wanganui I came across a model of the Dub's 'A' locomotive in SN 3/16 scale. Talking to the manufacturer he told me that he did one in 'O' gauge but only a part kit. Later that day I purchased the 'O' gauge kit.

Wheel centre castings were purchased from another supplier and machined. Tyres were made and easy flowed to the wheel castings. The kit was in flat brass etched form with added detail. Some rivet detail required punching. Frames were assembled and jig soldered. Motor, gearbox and wheels were fitted along with the third rail pickups. The boiler and cab are mounted on a separate base that attaches to the frame. A lot of machining was required for this part of the model. The side rods, cross heads and cylinders were next, followed by the brakes. The model is painted green with black frames. The engine runs well and looks great with a small NZR train behind it.

LETTER FROM ENGLAND

by Stan Compton

We have a junior member at Hereford, still at High School who does some work in engineering, on a voluntary basis, and he is learning a lot at this firm. He acquired a Myford lathe and needed a bench to mount it on. He was given some scrap angle and help with welding it up with a 1/4" plate top. Like a lot of young men he can only see a complex way of doing a simple job. He was worried about mounting the lathe without having an accurate tool-maker quality spirit level.

I explained to him the simple method of mounting a dial-gauge in the lathe tool-post; zero the dial on a short length of bright bar held in the chuck. Tighten up the hold-down bolts under the headstock, the dial reading should not alter, similarly to the bolts under the tailstock. Any movement on the dial indicates the need to fit shims, or even leaving the bolts slack for light work is better than twisting the lathe bed.

Our junior member had been given an old vice from his place of work and he asked me if it was worth re-covering. Yes of course it is a good British make, probably of cast steel instead of iron (test with a cold chisel, if it curls it is steel). It had had a hard life but the design is made to split horizontally, this means that it can be re-machined to remove wear,

something I have never seen before.

I used to have an off-set vice, made in Australia, so useful when working on a pair of locomotive frames that are held by their full width, vertically.

You will be aware of the spell of snow we have had recently, so many car drivers were in trouble with wheelspin on even a slight grade. I did meet a man who owned a late model Jaguar who had never driven it in the snow. He backed out of his drive and then tried to move forward, but the rear wheels spun due to the grade. He tried rolling back, touched the throttle, more wheelspin. Now what to do ? While thinking it over he forgot that the car was still in gear and the engine idling, and he found that the car was moving forward very slowly, the limited slip diff had taken charge!!

We have a big cider making plant on the outskirts of this very old town. Access to the plant used to be down a very narrow lane sided by old cottages still being lived in. Exports to Europe are collected by drivers of large semi-trailers who rely completely on their 'Sat Nav'. A new highway has been built for access but somehow the 'Sat Nav' has been programmed to send the drivers down the original narrow lane. Imagine being woken up at 0400 am to find a big semi-trailer stuck under your bedroom window when the driver failed to turn due to lack of room.

Birmingham manufactured a variety of goods for export once, the Austin Motor Works covered a large area once, now the site is being cleared.

We all used to hear of poor quality control in the rush to export years ago. I recall reading about an Austin A 40 given to a journalist to test, when he pulled out the choke control to start the car, he found that the choke came right out, being disconnected and held in by a match stick!!!!

It was a pleasure to see a small item on TV about one of the firms still making steel pen nibs for export. In my youth we all learnt to write with these pens and Birmingham was the main supplier producing millions annually. Nowadays the pen nibs are used for decorative printing.

At the Hereford track site we are all waiting for Easter when we are able to start track running again. Someone sympathised with me trying to cope with overweight passengers who want a ride on the elevated track with a very small child.

On checking over the Club 'Sweet Pea' locomotive, I found condensate in the oil pump. Normally the pump seems to work well but on stripping the pump down I found that the ball check valves had been wrongly assembled on the twin LBSC type oil pump. This locomotive must have done about 2000 miles on the portable track. When the pump tank is over-filled oil will drip out of the drive spindle bush onto one of the wheels. That oil soon spreads over the length of the track and the driver is then in trouble with wheel-slip. I fitted a drip tray to direct

the oil onto the crosshead, simple!!!!

During the recent cold spell I was given a kitset to assemble. A model of the famous Tea Clipper 'Cutty Sark' that is then fitted into a bottle. Easier said than done, as you may know the masts and sails fold down to insert into the neck of the bottle. Instructions are given to practice the erection of the masts by pulling on the cotton threads. Outside the bottle all worked well but on final assembly the foremast refused to go upright. I had to cut the cotton and reglue, hooray for 'Super Glue' how those old sailors managed I don't know. I could not buy any 'plasticine' to simulate the sea to push the plastic hull into so instead I used modelling clay that was water based. Now I had a bottle with condensate in it, but that dried out after a week on the radiator. The hull then came loose requiring the use of some glue applied with a length of bent wire!!! The result is not bad except for a top sail that would not sit true.

Firing Days

By Harold Gasson

I joined Ralph Painton as his fireman on the Sunday night and straight away was into another spot of fun. We booked on at 11.00pm for relief duties, on one of those nights that sometime crop up in May. It was like mid-winter, driving rain with a gale blowing. We were ordered to relieve a Swindon to Bordsley goods standing at West Curve, so we walked down the centre yard between the wagons to escape the weather until we reached the shunter's cabin and there stood our train. One look and we almost turned back; the engine was a Westernised version R.O.D. no 3007. She looked a stinker true to her class. To her credit she steamed, but not only in the boiler. Like her sisters she leaked steam everywhere; the cab dripped with condensation, and just to rub it in the coal was a mixture of dust and ovoids. We started off with the gait peculiar to the 'thirties'. Each revolution of the driving wheels produced a loud clang from the side rods and with each beat from the exhaust the engine would go forward, pause, then forward again; the result was that with the slackness between the engine and tender a perpetual backwards-forwards motion would set up. With all the time and money spent on designing self-trimming tenders, the only true self-trimmer was on these monstrosities.

We clanked our way towards Oxford spilling voids all over the track and we were covered in dust before we reached Radely. No amount of water would keep the dust down, but at Oxford our discomfort was to be shared.

We pulled up the middle road after being checked by distants (signals) from Hinksey, to receive a red light from Oxford Station North Box. Ralph stopped outside while I climbed down with gauge lamp in my hand to see what was wanted. As I entered the signal box the first person I saw was an RAF Squadron

Leader. The signalman explained that the officer had missed the last train to Heyford and asked if we would give him a lift.

Against regulations of course, but there are not many engine-men who have refused to give a serviceman a helping hand in wartime, and besides he was such a picture in his number one uniform. I was sure he would fully appreciate our version of a Wellington bomber.

I helped him over to the engine with the feeble light from the gauge lamp, and guided his feet onto the steps and up onto the footplate. Introductions and explanations were made, then he produced an expensive cigarette case and handed it around; he was obviously a well brought up young man. We in turn showed good manners in offering him a light from our cigarette lighter, the gauge lamp. The little door was unclipped and the lamp turned towards him, and to show that we too were gentlemen, we advised him not to let the cigarette come in contact with the wick or it might spoil the taste of the smoke. He thanked us, accepted the light, and then burnt his nose on the hot metal case of the gauge lamp!! We were off to a good start.

To make him feel right at home, Ralph and I went through a pre-take off check, opening and shutting the blow through cock and generally creating an atmosphere of great things to come; then we set off. I settled him down on the seat on my side and started work and by the time we had reached Wolvercote Junction we were beginning to pick them up a bit. We clattered over the junction with our Squadron Leader looking a bit apprehensive. By the light of the fire I could see that the shine on his polished shoes was beginning to dim with a layer of coal dust. I gave the footplate and his toe-caps a wash down at the same time, then Ralph gave her a bit more on the regulator ready for the long pull up Tackley Bank. The old engine began to shake and rattle as only a 'Thirty' can. I opened the firebox doors, got down the long pricker and gave the fire a good pull through. When I withdrew the pricker it was almost white hot from the tip to half-way up the handle. The R.A.F. trousers began to steam. She lifted her safety-valve and blew off hard just as we passed under Kidlington road bridge. For one moment Ralph and I thought that we would lose our passenger as we roared through the station. He was on the point of bailing out, but it would have been a bit foolhardy without a parachute!!! As we topped the bank at Tackley the gale caught us straight into the cab, and whipped his cap off into the night! He gave a cry of despair. Conversation had not been possible because of the noise, but I gave him a Woodbine, patted him on the knee and managed to convey to him that worse things happened at sea!!!!

Once over the top, Ralph shut off and we drifted down the other side of the bank to come to a shuffling halt in Heyford Station.

In his eagerness to leave us our Squadron Leader put his foot under the damper handle, ripped the upper from the sole and landed face-down in the mixture of ovoids and wet dust! We picked him up and wiped him down with cotton waste, the helped him onto the platform.

He looked very forlorn standing there in the driving rain. He was covered in coal dust, he had lost his cap, somewhere he had lost one beautiful tan leather glove, and he had a scorch mark on his trousers. He was no longer the immaculate officer who had joined us at Oxford, but true to tradition he was an officer and a gentleman. With a very refined public school accent he courteously thanked us for the lift back to his station, and then he said he had now two ambitions in life where before he had only one. The first was to survive his flying operations and the war; the second was to get Ralph and myself into the air with him for just ten minutes!!! Somehow we got the impression that he had not enjoyed steam traction, and we watched him flap his way out of the station gate, with his shoe opening and closing like a crocodile's mouth. I expect he by-passed the guard-room at Heyford R.A.F. Station and used the hole in the fence to get in. No self respecting guard would have believed his explanation for the state he was in.

Locomotion Reflections

This year's event was the 24th running of our open weekend or "Locomotion" as we brand it. Firstly I'd like to thank all of you who gave up their weekend to assist in the running of our event particularly Janice Bold, Janice Hall, Robyn Chambers, Pat Perkins, and Barbara Leslie for keeping us all fuelled and watered. We as a club need to acknowledge the assistance of Trade Tools in providing advertising to support our efforts in acquiring editorial space in the Tribune newspaper. Whilst talking to Kevin in the shop he introduced me to the "Measurex" range of measuring tools now available from Trade Tools here in Palmerston North which I had seen advertised in the AME magazine, well worth checking out if you're in the market for new measuring instruments'.

On the Sunday morning we had a safety audit of our railway operation carried out by MEANZ safety auditor Mark Stack from the Hawks Bay Model Engineering Club. We had tidied up a few issues arising from our previous audit so it will be interesting to see how we faired when we get the report. One outstanding issue for our railway is public access to our steaming bay area, this only being a problem during our locomotion weekend in my view. I don't believe that we are putting persons at any risk by their being there with our set up, more a case of the public invading your personal space i.e. getting in the way. Your cooperation in keeping our normal car parking area clear of

vehicles was appreciated as we need to be as visible as possible from the Pioneer Highway and to maintain clear lines of sight so that those of us who are in charge (The Operator and his deputies) can see what's going on.

So once again a big Thank You and hopefully we'll see you back next year for Locomotion number 25.

Richard Lockett

Locomotion 2010

Unlike last year the weather treated us well for the annual Locomotion invitation event on the 6-7th March. A short sharp rainstorm on Saturday morning quickly turned into a cloudless sky. Sunday was cloudy but fine and warm. A good range of visiting locomotives were there and together with the turn out of local members there were usually enough equipment available to satisfy the number of waiting passengers. The only time when there was any waiting was for a short period on Sunday morning (a bit too much gossiping in the steaming bays perhaps?).

The well turned-out locomotives were a credit to their owners and there was a good range of types on display. The younger riders were particularly taken with the electric Toby and many turned down a ride behind a steam loco to wait for him. The club's Santa Fe diesel also was a popular choice. A number of pieces of equipment took my eye. The Orenstein & Koppel geared loco was a particularly striking model quite different to anything else on display. Our own Ken Neilson's four-cylinder articulated tank loco, based on the Uintah Railroad's #51 is a personal favourite. This railroad had grades of 7.5% and curves of less than 100 foot radius. Other units of note were a couple of very nice electric machines complete with pantographs, a pretty US type locomotive (Old Eli) and a number of tank locomotives.

Three traction engines flew the flag for this genre. Two nice Burrell 3" scale units and a 4" scale Fowler were active on both days. The "static" displays were not so static as Graeme Hall had both his Atkinson cycle engine and his 9-cylinder rotary Bentley running several times over the weekend. Graeme also has his 4-cylinder Offenhauser engine on display. The workmanship in Graeme's models serves as an incentive to us all.

All in all a weekend of great models and good fellowship. The enjoyment of the event was enhanced greatly by the good work of the ladies who spent most of their time in the catering facility providing delicious food for the BBQ and both lunches and morning and afternoon tea.

Thank you ladies!

John Tweedie

Locomotion March 2010



Toby was very popular with the younger riders!

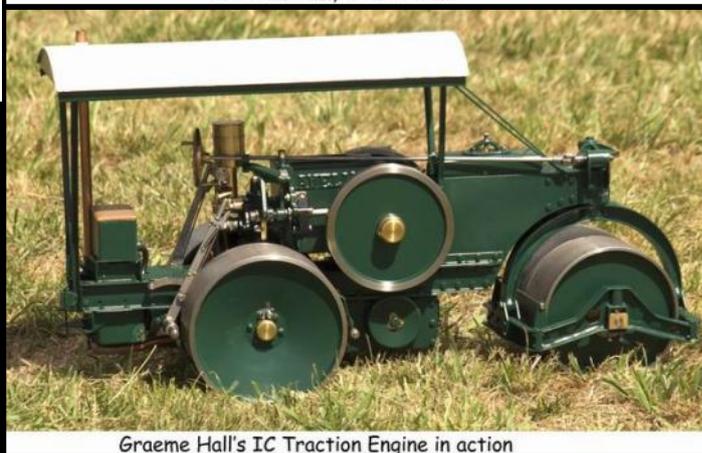
Photos and text
by John Tweedie



Ken Neilson ready to roll with #51



Another fine model.



Graeme Hall's IC Traction Engine in action



Laurie Perkin's Wab ran well all day.

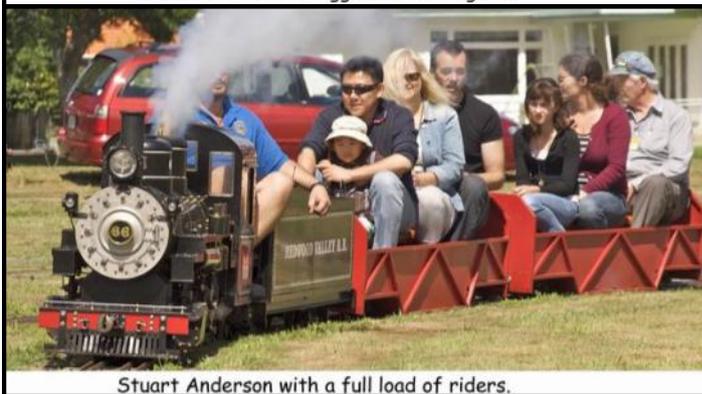


This well-presented Orenstein & Koppel geared locomotive is also fitted with Rigggenbach rack gear.

We all had a
great
weekend.



Graeme Hall's Atkinson cycle engine under power.



Stuart Anderson with a full load of riders.



Nicola was enjoying driving with Barry on the back



Traction Engine Lineup