



## Newsletter of THE PALMERSTON NORTH MODEL ENGINEERING CLUB INC

Managers of the "MARRINER RESERVE RAILWAY"  
Please address all correspondence to :- 22b Haydon St, Palmerston North.

**PRESIDENT**  
Bruce Geange  
(06) 357-0566

**SECRETARY**  
Murray Bold  
(06) 355-7000

**TRACK CONVENOR**  
Richard Lockett  
(06) 323-0948

**EDITOR**  
Doug Chambers  
(06) 354-9379

November  
2003  
No 285

**PNMEC Home Page** [www.pnmeec.org.nz](http://www.pnmeec.org.nz)  
**Email:-** [pnmeec@clear.net.nz](mailto:pnmeec@clear.net.nz)

### 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,

Place  
stamp  
here

**T  
H  
E  
  
G  
E  
N  
E  
R  
A  
T  
O  
R**

### Coming Events

**Coming Events:** November Monthly Meeting. This will be the Club's **End of Year function**.  
Dinner at the Albert Restaurant and Bar at 700 Main Street, Palmerston North on 27<sup>th</sup> November at 6 .45 pm.  
More details on page 2.

**Mid Week Run at Marriner Reserve Railway:** 25<sup>th</sup> November, between 10 am and 2 pm.  
27<sup>th</sup> January 2004. Between 10 am and 2 pm

Please contact Doug Chambers beforehand.

**Track running at Marriner Reserve Railway:**

7 <sup>th</sup>	December	1 - 4 pm
21 <sup>st</sup>	December	1 - 4 pm
4 <sup>th</sup>	January	1 - 4 pm
18 <sup>th</sup>	January	1 - 4 pm

**Open Weekends :** Steam and Steel Live Steam Convention at Hamilton. January 9 - 11 2004.  
Manakau Live Steamers Waitangi Day Three Day Run February 6 - 8 2004  
Palmerston North Model Engineers. Locomotion Weekend March 6 - 7 2004

The closing date for the next issue of The Generator is Friday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2004

## REPORT of the OCTOBER MEETING

About twenty-two members made their way to Dannevirke where we were invited to see through Brian Wiffin's Toolroom. Brian had his newly completed gear-hobbing machine in action and members were greatly interested to see a gear being made. After two gears were cut they were faced in the surface grinder.

Outside the workshop Brian demonstrated his hydraulic wood splitter. Our secretary was obviously very impressed with this machine as it was hard to prize him off the controls. He remembered many hard days splitting wood with an axe and could see the advantages of the powered splitter. Brian invited him to have a go and I believe that Murray would have been quite happy to continue until all the wood was split.

Members enjoyed a bar-be-que lunch and all of us thank Brian and Margaret for their hospitality.



## MEMORIAL SERVICE

Several Palmerston North Model Engineering Club members attended the Memorial Service held for Terry and Pat Jowett's daughter Vicki Leist on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> October.

## NOVEMBER MEETING

Instead of our usual **“Wine and Cheese”** evening it has been decided to go a step further. You, your wife, partner, your other half, your whatever are invited to join your fellow members for dinner at the **Albert Restaurant and Bar**, 700 Main Street, Palmerston North on Thursday 27 November 2003 at 6.45 pm.

The restaurant is fully licensed. There will be pre dinner nibbles available.

Dinner will cost \$15 .00 each and the menu is. Soup, Roast Pork, 3 Vegetables and 2 Deserts.

The Committee will attempt to contact all members to get an idea of numbers attending we need to give the restaurant an idea of the numbers attending. As at 8th November there are 48 members and partners coming. If you would like to go please let Bruce 357 0566 or Cynthia 354 7100 know that you plan to attend.

## FOR SALE

A small Air compressor. It has a 1/3 hp single-phase electric motor. Suitable for model engineers requirements. Price \$100. Ono. Apply to David Neilsen Phone 06 355 1520

## LETTER FROM ENGLAND

By Stan Compton

Recently a group of us went to the Fleet Air Arm museum based at Yeovilton in Somerset. So much to see, it takes at least four hours to go through the displays. From World War 1 aircraft 'mock-ups' to the original Concorde supersonic jet-liner. A pleasure to get close up to the engines, rotary and radial also to examine closely how the early aircraft were constructed.

I had no idea the WW 2 "Walrus" was designed by R. J. Mitchell, well known for his "Spitfire" design in the late 'thirties'. An example of a 'Walrus' could be examined on the floor. It looked so basic yet we were told it did a great job being able to land on the sea to rescue stranded pilots who were forced to ditch their planes in action.

Many models of aircraft carriers from the first crude conversion of civilian vessels, even a platform on a barge towed by a destroyer at 'full speed' into the wind enabling an early biplane to take-off. Examples of WW 2 aircraft designed to have their wings folded for storage, what a problem this could be in poor weather on the flight deck. I think it was a Grumman 'Hellcat' that was the first plane to have their wings folded by hydraulics, what a boon that was. I gather it was a formidable aircraft, the sheer size of it alongside a "Seafire" was impressive. We saw helicopters and 'Harriers' located in a mock-up of a hanger in an aircraft carrier, but the large screen presentation, with sound effects, of a "Phantom" jet taking off, was awesome !!!

I found the display showing the various types of work performed by the "Wrens" in both World Wars was very interesting, my experience was that they were mostly very nice girls who did a great job. Our guide, an ex aircraft mechanic, told us that the girls trained to service the radio equipment were highly thought of because they were so thorough. I recall being allocated to keep the engine going with a Wren crew of a 36 foot harbour launch and they were a great bunch. It was years later when I realised that the engine was built with steel tubes to guide the high tension leads and in the damp cold winter conditions those leads would 'short' internally. Those old Lucas magnetos got damp inside as well, unlike the American ones that were so reliable.

The Autumn Rally at the Birmingham Track at Illshawheath was a very pleasant day out. The weather being hot and dry, continuing our unusual summer. I was told that thirty-seven engines were booked in on the first day. The atmosphere is always great there and so pleasant to sit watching the various engines pass by. Very few Victorian locomotives get modelled so it was a real pleasure to see a North London Railway 4-4-0 tank with its highly polished dome glide by. It had done a lot of hard work but was in fine condition and it made my day. My contribution was to put the new 0-4-4 tank on display, it does run but I have not been able to find time to put it through its steam test.

Standing on the display track it looked so small alongside a Midland 4-2-2 being one inch scale is part of the reason, but Don Young intended this to cut the weight down. One of his Derby 2 P 4-4-0 locos in 3 1/2" gauge stood next to mine and it was only one inch less in height. The builder of the Derby 2 P told me he was very pleased with its performance, but he said he had to add eleven pounds of lead ballast to get good traction. Some was in the ash pan, some under the cab roof and the rest wherever it could be squeezed in. I know the problem. My "Maid of Kent" has 26 pounds of lead added and my old "George the Fifth" that ended up in Twickenham, near London has 45 pounds of ballast at the rear. Plus the drawbar transfers some of the tender weight onto the drag beam.

I am ashamed to admit that I have given up on the model of the "Endeavour". It is really not my thing, I spent all day making rigging blocks from one-sixteenth boxwood, and the result was very poor. The ship's wheel from brass was fine but it took such a long time to make. I am now preparing drawings of a small steam fire engine. Something that I can cope with and I will let you know about progress.

Being one of the boiler inspectors that is always on site means a lot of work, I don't mind, I have the background going back to working in a locomotive works in Canada in the 'fifties'. But you should see what a new member who had bought a locomotive at a sale presented. It was plastered with soft solder over the stays, in effect a lot of fusible plugs. If the water gets too low then the solder will melt and there will be an immediate pressure drop. The locomotive was a "Doris" and there is a constant 'blow' up the chimney from the solid piston valves!!! However the locomotive goes and the owner is happy.

I had a tiny boiler about two and a half-inch diameter by five inches long to test for a model steam launch, all silver brazed, no problems. The builder told me it had to be tested to enable it to be run on Lake Windermere up North. Later the boiler was returned for the steam test and a certificate was issued. As the builder was not a club member, he was charged a small fee, which he was happy to pay into the club funds.

Yesterday was almost the last running day at the Worcester Track, Gavin with the big 5" 2-10-0 "Gordon" worked, with me and the "Maid of Kent" on the elevated track. Not a pause for two hours coping with the crowds. Peter with his 0-6-2 seven and a quarter inch gauge tank was working just as hard on the ground level track. With just seven running days annually it is impossible to cover running costs like insurance and rates. Most members are getting old and little new input so capital is being spent to survive.

Did you hear about the man who went and ordered his meal? "I want my beans cold in the middle, my bacon shriveled up and dry, my sausage black on the outside and raw on the inside, my fried egg to be hard and dry". The café owner replied, "We've got no time to bother with an order like that." The customer replied, "I don't see why not, that is what you gave me yesterday !!!!"

## A look back in time

Richard Lockett

The 17<sup>th</sup> of October 1993 must have been a beautiful spring day with eight locomotives running on the Marriner Reserve Railway.

EB 28	Club loco	Jubilee	Ron Walker
F40PH	John Comrie	Beejax	Dick Griffiths
Abagaile	Bruce Geange	Ashford	Doug Chambers
Mallet 51	Ken Nielsen	Atlantic	Grant Chalk

How do I know this you ask, well the 17<sup>th</sup> was the first entry in the track log book and with ten years having elapsed since then I thought a flick through its pages was in order.

The purpose of this book is to record every running activity on the railway, what loco's are running, that pre run track inspection i.e. walk of track has been done and signed off and has been our accident and incident reporting mechanism.

As regards to track inspections I have done this on 155 occasions which equates to walking 72 km's.

Looking at the inspectors comments the removing of wind fall sticks from the track has to be done on nearly all occasions with broken glass being a summer time occurrence while back in the mid nineties judging by the inspectors comments re mower damage you would swear that Mr Magoo was driving the council's mower.

Just a reminder as to the process when running at the track.

1. Before any locos take to the tracks a track inspection shall be undertaken and log book signed to that fact.
2. The person who undertakes the inspection is to be "The Operator" of the Marriner Reserve Railway for the occasion.
3. "The Operator" is to oversee the operation of the railway for the occasion
4. All incidents, accidents etc are to be reported to "The Operator"
5. "The Operator" to ensure log book is filled out re No 4 and the loco's present.

This process is for all track running, public and private.

Over the last ten years we've hosted some one off appearances by locomotives with interesting names, Levin pea, Ormondville Shunter (now on display at the Ormondville station), Mann Juliet, Petone Speedy, TRX, Castle class Seige Engine, Kapti Enterprise.

Back to present day, ten years on, October 18<sup>th</sup> 2003 a clear day but with cold southerly blowing, four loco's present.

Robyn 7.25"	Kerr Stuart Wren Class	Richard Lockett
DSA 5"	NZR Shunter	Les Fordyce
Pamela 5"	English Y4 Shunter	Chris Rogers
Grommett 5"	Freelance TR	Daniel Ward

There's one loco owner missing from these two lists. His loco's have not missed many running days over the last ten years, Peter Hatton's Duchess or the Scotsman, fine performers always run ahead of schedule as befitting express locomotives.

Having a flick through the log book brought back a lot of memories for me of loco's and their engineers some sadly no longer with us, of good days and not so good days, after all every day is a good day if you are running a locomotive.

## ASSOCIATED MOTOR CYCLES

In their factory at Plumstead, Woolwich, A.M.C. built the Matchless motorcycles, later A.J.S. motorcycles and finally from 1963 Nortons as well. The following are excerpts from an article written by a man who worked for A.M.C. from 1958 to 1965.

The majority of the parts were made 'in house' the main exception being the ferrous castings, cylinders and cranks, which were, made by Bircal's of Birmingham and the alloy castings which were made by Stones of Deptford.



A.M.C.'s factory in south – east London was known locally as 'Colliers'. The old factory was an early example of pre-cast concrete construction and was four storeys high. It had been added to over the years until there was no room for further expansion. Even the landing by the stairways had a man working at a bench. The space under the roof was occupied by welders, a cable shop, and provided storage for incomplete machines. Components were moved from floor to floor by two small lifts. The components were then moved from station to station by little old men pushing

handcarts. It was said that every now and then one of these old chaps would keel over and die on the job and his handcart would be used to wheel the body away!!!!

Apart from the engine and gearbox assembly shops the factory was as dark as a dungeon. The windows had wire mesh over them as well as the paint put on during the World War 2 'blackout'. The polishing shop was pitch-black. Rows of electric motors drove grinding and felt wheels. A rough casting had to be prepared with a coarse emery wheel before polishing and that produced a lot of dust. Each polisher had a naked bulb over the wheel and a crude extractor that exhausted out onto the roof to pollute the neighbourhood. The younger men would wear a dust mask but the older men would inhale the dust, spitting occasionally to get rid of the grit. The blue or red tanks for the twin cylinder machines were painted in the following manner. Two men down on their knees beside an old bath full of the appropriate colour of paint, one of them held a new tank over the paint, his fingers in the petrol filler cap hole. The other would then use an old saucepan as a ladle scooping up the paint and deftly pouring over the tank surface. The tank was then hung on a conveyor belt to go through the ovens.

The manufacture of the tanks started on the ground floor where they were pressed out as two halves. Then handcart and lift took them to the third floor where they were trimmed. From there they went up to the welding shop under the roof and once finished there they went back down to the ground floor for painting. Once the paint dried they went up to the second floor for fitting of the caps, taps and knee - grips.

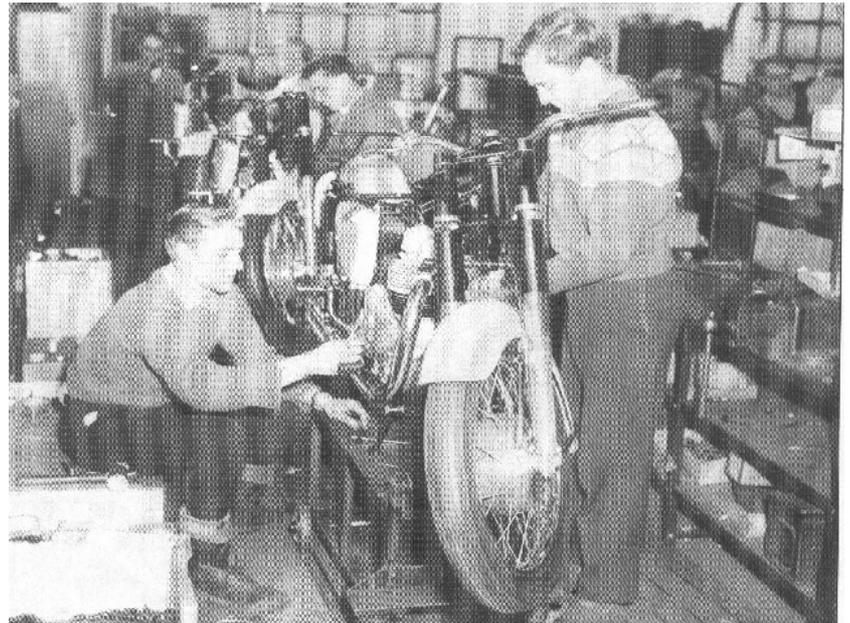
The cable shop under roof is worth mentioning. Just one man made all the cables required for new machines and spare parts. Once given the measurements of the cable he would use special punches to make the ball for the end of the inner wire, dip it into the flux, then into a pot of molten solder, back into the flux after giving the cable a little flick to remove excess solder. To make a cable took seconds rather than minutes.

After working in various parts of the assembly line the writer became one of six men employed as testers. Testing the production machines was usually quite straightforward. Each man had to keep to a quota of 7 twins or 9 singles. This had to be achieved regardless of weather conditions, sun, rain, hail or snow.!!!

Occasionally a 'tester' would be allocated machines from the experimental shop. This involved 150 miles in the morning, lunch and fuel and then another 150 miles in the afternoon. Our instructions were to run as fast as we could but not to deliberately destroy machines.

After he had been a tester for some years he was transferred to the competition department. The competition department was in a long narrow building opposite the main factory. The trials and scrambles division had the front of the building with real windows that looked out onto the street. The road race department had the other half with a basement that housed a couple of dynometers. The engines being tested exhausted into a railway cutting and if a train were waiting to enter the nearby station the passengers would be treated to the sound of a Matchless G 50 running at 'full noise'.

The G 50 and the A.J.S. 7R engines were run on the dyno with power taken from the crankshaft. Then the motor was installed in the frame and with dealer plates fixed on a 25 mile road test was undertaken. A straight pipe was fitted inside the megaphone exhaust but the roar was still very satisfactory. Some of the inner town road surface was cobblestones with tramlines, cabbage leaves from the market and wet road conditions meant that part of the ride had to be taken with a great deal of care. The factory rule was "If you drop it, don't come back!!!"



For six days the writer worked as a tyre fitter. The tyres being fitted up were for A.J.S. 650cc CS models. These had two tyre clamps on the rear wheel and one on the front. Eighty – four front tyres and eighty-four rear tyres had to be fitted each day and all with a single 6 inch Dunlop tyre tool!!!!

The writer's personal opinion was that the Norton 650 cc SS twin was the nicest all round machine produced at the Plumstead Works. I would agree. I owned one of these machines and it was superb in handling, power and braking.



## Labour Weekend @ Havelock North

Over Labour weekend several PNMEC members travelled to Havelock North to ride the rails of Kerianga Park Railway. I understand Ken Neilsen went on Saturday. The best day was Sunday as it was much warmer than Saturday. Sunday saw Richard, Cynthia, Murray and Simon. Stuart was there for the whole weekend. At left is Richard and "Robyn" taking passengers back to the station. Below left is Jim McLean's new loco "Haggis" on the turntable. It ran very well.

There were a number of visiting locos from Manakau and elsewhere around the country.

Thanks to the KPR staff and members for a great weekend of fun and comradeship.



**The Generator**