



April 2006
No 311

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

Newsletter of THE PALMERSTON NORTH MODEL ENGINEERING CLUB INC

Managers of the "MARRINER RESERVE RAILWAY"

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TRACK RUNNING

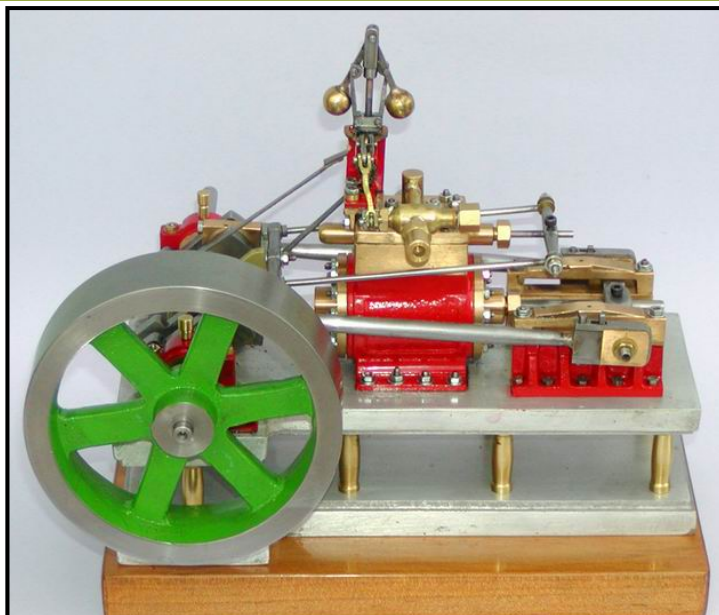
This is held on the FIRST and THIRD Sunday of each month, from 1 pm to 4 pm Summer and 1 pm to 3 pm during the Winter. All club members are welcome to attend and help out with loco coaling, watering and passenger marshalling - none of the tasks being at all onerous.

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,
Palmerston North

Place
stamp
here

This Months Featured Model



MARCH MEETING.

Stuart Anderson had a photo album of pictures taken at CanMod 2006 and Locomotion 2006.
Barry Parker had some of the components for the 5" gauge 'Britannia' boiler he is beginning to make.

The member's two-minute talks on interesting workplace experiences were varied and sometimes odd. I thought Model Engineers being basically a creative group, but it was surprising to hear a large proportion of the speakers talking about the destructive forces of gelignite, dynamite and other types of explosive materials. A very informative look into the background to some of our fellow modellers.

APRIL MEETING - AGM

This will be held on the 23rd February in the
Hearing Association Rooms,
Church Street,
Palmerston North,
at 7.30pm.

This will be the Annual General Meeting.

If any members feel they would like to offer their services on the Committee, please let some of the current members know.

Members should give some thought as to which member they will vote for, to be the holder of the Compton's Shield, which is awarded to the 'Clubman of the Year'.

COMING EVENTS

Mid Week Run at Marriner Reserve Railway

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

Track running at Marriner Reserve Railway

7th May	1 - 3 pm
21st May	1 - 3 pm

OPEN WEEKENDS

Thames Small Gauge Railway
20 & 21 May

MODEL OF THE MONTH

Members attending the February Meeting were able to inspect and admire the stationary Side Rod steam engine that John Tweedie had just completed. The model is called the side rod engine. I bought a set of castings from Brunel in the UK. Flywheel is cast iron and the rest are gunmetal. The rest I made from bits and pieces mainly scrounged from the scrap bin in the workshop in my Institute at Massey. It took me about three or four years to build. It was the first major model I tackled. I had made a couple of little oscillators. I learned a lot and have gained a lot of confidence (and speed) from building this model. Most of it went quite well except the eccentric sleeve and the crankshaft. The sleeve is now a bit of brass rather than gunmetal due to a machining accident and I made three crankshafts before I was satisfied.

The construction of this engine from the Brunel set of castings was described by Stan Bray in a series of articles in Model Engineer from October 1986 to May 1987.

FOR SALE

PETROL- HYDRAULIC 'Hunslet' (7 1/4" gauge)

This is the NZR Dsa built by the late Jim Curtis. Fully detailed the Dsa looks good and runs superbly. This is a classic example of model engineering. It featured in the Australian Model Engineering magazine (September-October 2002) and comes complete with a purpose built driver's car built to the same standard.

Enquiries to Jean Curtis, 115 Guy Street, Dannevirke.
Or phone 06 374 7151. Price \$10,000.

0 - 4 - 0 NZR Tr.

In 7 1/4" gauge. Powered by a Briggs and Stratton via an Albion gearbox. Including a driver's truck.
Asking Price \$3,200 Phone (04) 904 6195

The closing date for the next issue of The Generator is Friday 12 May

LETTER FROM ENGLAND

By Stan Compton

Recently while out walking I met a man who told me he owns a 1934, 4.5 litre Bentley, obviously his pride and joy although his hobby is collecting old 78 rpm gramophone records. These he takes, with a suitable good quality gramophone to play to elderly residents in various care homes. He takes a variety of songs of their era plus the odd jazz record. To see their eyes light up when they hear the tunes of years ago makes it all worth while.

Mention of the Bentley took my memory back fifty years; while living in Canada I saw a 1928 Rolls Royce advertised located about 500 miles away. It was stated that there was only a low mileage on the clock and four new tyres had been fitted as it had been standing under cover and unused for some years.

Being young and impetuous in those days I decided this was a chance too good to miss and started out at the weekend in my 1941 Pontiac Coupe, now a collectable item. Being new to Canada I never gave a thought to the weather forecast, and as the trip progressed the weather got worse. Ice began to form on the windscreen and I was scraping it off as I drove along. Then snow began to fall, real Canadian snow. I was way out in the country with about a hundred miles to go when the engine cut out. Probably the driving snow had got onto the plug leads. But I had a bit of good luck when a farmer driving a pick-up truck fitted with a heavy plank bolted to the front bumper pushed my car into his farm yard.

"Thank you very much" I said, "I have a sleeping bag and I will stop in the car."

"Oh no you're not." he replied "You will be dead in the morning; you can sleep on my sofa."

A very kind man living alone, twice my age who advised me to forget the Rolls Royce when he heard what I intended to do. He was quite right of course, as I had a young wife and we were starting out on a new life in a young country. Next day the snow had cleared and I drove home a bit wiser I think.

Some time ago I had a "Juliet" boiler brought to me for a hydrostatic test which was achieved with no problems and it was duly certified as passing its hydraulic test. Recently I heard a tale of woe from the owner about a sudden loss of pressure during the first test steaming of this new locomotive. The bush for the blow-down valve had blown out and the two bottom rows of side-stays in the firebox had their solder caulking melted.

It was the old story, a new owner keen to see the engine run. He had a couple of helpers with him

when steam was raised for the first time.

I think all this took place at the owner's home, not on a track, and this meant that with no drain cocks fitted and perhaps minimal clearance of the valves to the steam chests, the cylinders became clogged with condensate and consequently the wheels would not revolve. A heavier engine could have been pushed along a track to clear the cylinders, but not easily done on a small engine.

Meanwhile the blower was probably full on and the fire getting brighter, pressure rising fast and then someone noticed that there was no water in the gauge glass.

"Don't panic. Don't panic." says Corporal Jones.

Pump some water into the boiler. !! A fatal mistake!

The water flashed into steam, the safety valve could not cope and bang! The blow-down bush blew out.

It was only soft soldered into the backhead and acted as a fusible plug releasing the pressure.

It took about three hours work to make a new flanged bush with drawn bronze bolts to take the strain, re-solder it and the side-stays and another six hours to make and fit plugs and seal leaks to get the boiler into a state where it could pass the hydraulic pressure demanded to prove a repaired boiler. All work I could have well done without, simply because no one watched the water level. Often, by closing the blower valve and stuffing a rag in the chimney, pressure can be made to drop very quickly in cases where the fire cannot be dropped easily.

At Hereford track-site we have been working two days a week to get the new carriage shed completed during the coldest winter for years. Sometimes we arrive to start work with temperature just above zero and only reach four degrees all day with no sign of the sun. Yet it got completed and now we are laying track ready to take the rolling stock, what a boon it will be to have four roads for storage. Later provision has to be made to hoist the rolling stock up above flood level, located as we are on a flood plain. It is just a few weeks until the start of our summer running season and there is still plenty to do.

I was looking at some back numbers of the Generator and I found one detailing a Tuesday Run with a photograph of Roy Hood and his "Tich". Roy built this engine many years ago. Keeping a fire going on a grate the size of a matchbox is a real challenge, full marks Roy.

Our junior member, Jack approached me at the last meeting. "How many hours a week, are you doing on your loco Stan?" About thirty was my reply. "I am doing ten hours on my Simplex," he proudly answered. For a High School boy, that is good going. I wonder how long he can keep that up.

Featherston Festival of Steam

Richard Lockett

The 11th of March saw Stuart Anderson and I down at the Cross Creek Railway in Featherston for their version of our Locomotion event.

Six visiting loco's, 3 steam powered made for a busy track and as I was burning real coal I parked Robyn up after an hour as I can't handle the smoke very well.



Cross Creek have been in operation for three years now and have found out as with our MRR that we don't run miniature railways for the money so they had various other income generating schemes in operation, firewood raffles, little big dig, sausage sizzle etc and stalls were invited to attend as well as vintage engines and military vehicles.

With good weather, plenty of food and drink a very enjoyable day was had capped of with a beer and meal at the railway headquarters the local RSA.

Thanks CROSS CREEK RAILWAY



Just two of the traction engines that were seen at Rangiora.



The Generator

Traction Rally

24 - 25 - 26th March 2006 Rangiora Show Grounds

Thursday 23rd March 2006

After loading the traction engine and all my gear into Richard's vehicle we left for the ferry terminal at about 11.20 pm arriving at the Blue Bridge Ferry Terminal approx. 2 am. and boarded the Santa Marie and sailed at 3 am.

The passage across the strait seemed very short as I nodded off until we reached Picton. From here we drove to Blenheim and filled the vehicle with petrol then travelled on to Ward where we had a cooked breakfast (bacon & eggs).

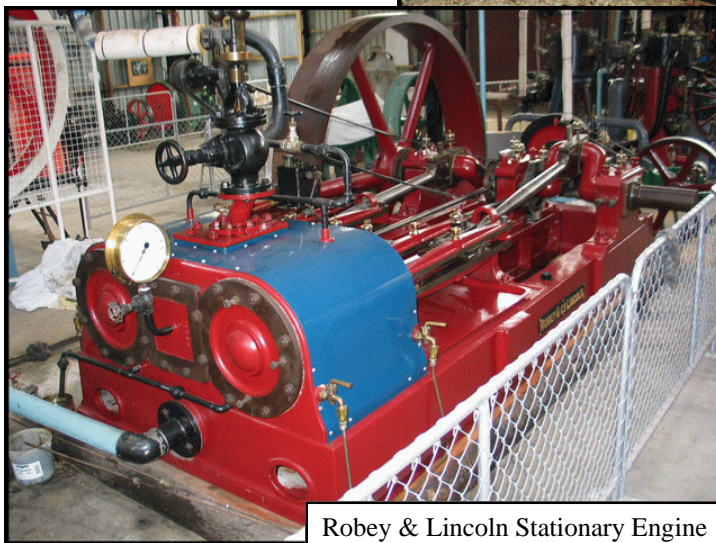
Driving down the Kaikoura Coast we noticed seals resting on the rocks. The next stop was at Weka Pass Rail-

steam museum and a wander around the complex. A boiler in the museum supplies steam to a number of running engines.

There is a great variety of steam machines to be seen in the museum with some that



Weka Pass Railway



Robey & Lincoln Stationary Engine



are very rare. A non running Brown and May portable engine No 6919 is housed in a separate room. Outside is steam memorabilia scattered around the area.

There is a building for the traction engines, a 3 foot 6 inch

way at Waipara to have a look around the complex. Bill Parker and his passengers arrived shortly afterwards. The Dg class locomotive was being given a wash ready for the afternoon run. Diesel engines are used at present due to the fire ban. A steam locomotive and carriages were in the shed with a track inspection car outside.

Our next stop was for lunch in the park at Amberley and then on to McLeans Island where we were allowed a look through the

gauge railway and a 7¹/₄ inch gauge railway built with a very heavy steel track and part of a guards van as a station.

Our next stop was at a Hornby 'O' gauge train collectors home to view his collection and layout. Whatever locomotive was placed on the track and the power turned on it ran with no problems. There was an interesting collection of locos, rolling stock and other accessories around the walls. The collection has trains of other manufactures in it also.

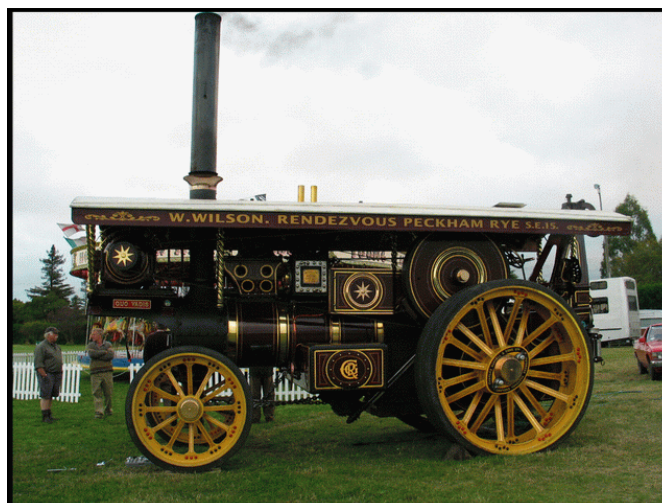


Part of the train collection above and the home-made Zeplin train to the right



Our next stop was the Riccarton Mall where we had afternoon tea and a look around before driving to the Rangiora Show Grounds where there was a hive of activity with traction engines running around and others parked in the lower paddock. In amongst the living vans and motor homes a couple of scale model traction engines were spotted. Near the side show entertainment and sales tents the Burrell Scenic Showmans Road Locomotive and Mathews Three Abreast Gallopers were set up and looking a great sight. A photo stop was made here. We next had a look at the main shopping centre and then onto our hosts' home where we were

made most welcome and had a great meal and a pleasant evening. The garage door also had a repair job done on it.



Burrell
Scenic Showmans
Road Locomotive
'Quo Vadis'

To be Continued