

# ROAD 'N' RAIL



## MAXITRAK OWNERS' CLUB MAGAZINE



Number 79

Winter 2016

## Welcome to new members

These are the new members up to January 2016

<b>Mem No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Address</b>
1020	Mr P Guy	
1021	Mr R Barrett	
1022	Mr A Carpenter	
1023	Mr D Bainbridge	
1024	Mr S Deeley	

Should you wish to obtain further details of any member please contact the Secretary

### On the front cover:

Seen at last year's visit to Worthing we have a line up of five small battery electrics headed by two Planets. These locos are very popular for taking on visits to other Clubs being compact and easily lifted into the car boot, even easier if the battery has been removed. A few hours roaming the track is possible, but this can be extended if a spare battery is available.

### Road 'n' Rail

#### Publication dates:-

Road 'n' Rail is usually published four times a year, in Winter, Spring, Summer and Autumn

#### Contributions:-

Contributions in the form of articles, photographs and letters are most welcome and should be sent to the Editor, details on the opposite page. Inclusion or publication of an article however does not constitute agreement or endorsement of the author's view

**Committee 2015/6**

**Chairman**

Trevor Solly

**Secretary**

Tony Pearson

**Treasurer**

Tony Pearson

**Magazine Editor**

Jeff Dickinson

**Club Webmaster**

Mick Morgan

**Printed by:**

Alex Probyn  
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**ROAD**

**‘n’**

**RAIL**

**the magazine  
of  
the Maxitrak Owners Club**

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Southern Federation of Model  
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## **Editor's comments**

When I started planning this issue I was rather concerned that I didn't have many articles to fill the pages. Then Chairman Trevor 'came up trumps' with several visit reports and Mark sent in his article on his latest driving carriage.

I do depend on Club members inputs to produce a range of articles that will interest our members so, please keep the articles rolling in - after all, feed back between Club members helps us all not only enjoy our hobby but also make an occasional improvement to add our own personality to a 'standard' product.

This year's visit programme is coming together and, whilst some have still to be finally confirmed, the venues are OK and I'm fairly confident that our planned dates will go ahead. I hope there will be another issue of Road n Rail before June (dependent to some extent on having sufficient material), but, in any event, details of the final programme will be posted on the MOC web site.

Jeff

## **Parish Notices**

- March 12<sup>th</sup>      Boiler testing day at Leatherhead**
- June 4<sup>th</sup>        Visit to Norwich & District SME (date to be confirmed)**
- July 9<sup>th</sup>        Visit to Derby SMEE (date to be confirmed)**
- August 6<sup>th</sup>     Visit to Surrey SME, Leatherhead and MOC AGM**
- August 21<sup>st</sup>    Visit to Worthing & District SME**
- September 3<sup>rd</sup>   Southern Federation Rally at Guildford

When visiting another Club, owners of steam models must take with them a valid current boiler certificate and ensure they have Public Liability insurance cover as the insurance of the host club may not cover visiting models. Please let the host know you are coming, it helps with catering and planning the event.

## A view from the Chair

May I start by wishing all members and their families a very happy New Year.

Well another year begins and once again you have to put up with my ramblings as Chairman. Last year I brought myself a Maxitrak Planet so that I have a small locomotive to bring to the rallies, I cannot believe the power of these small locos. I look forward to also using it for public running at Leatherhead once we have our raised track in working order (more on this in another article)

Two weeks before Christmas I lost my faithful companion, Fred the dog, a Labrador ran into him playing and it tore all the muscles in Fred's back legs. I had no choice but to have him put 'to sleep'. Many MOC members that have visited Leatherhead and other venues will have met Fred.(See photo below)

The next running season will soon be on us again and I look forward to seeing many of you at the rallies around the country.

When I was at the Worthing rally one of their members told me about his Union Pacific loco's whistle which is a child's wooden blow whistle linked to an air pump - duly impressed I am in the throes of converting my GP15 to this type.

Meanwhile I have remade the pistons for my Maid of Kent so let's hope it will run on compressed air this time.

Elsewhere in this issue of the magazine you will see I have been visiting various exhibitions and have written small reports on what I found interesting, I hope you do too.

Thanks for your support in your membership and I hope to see you around starting with the Boiler Test day at Leatherhead on Saturday March 12th.

Trevor



## **Boiler test day 2016 at Leatherhead**

For Club members who get their boiler tests done at the Club boiler Test Day the event will again be held at the Surrey Club track at Leatherhead enabling those with steam locos to have a run on the track and demonstrate that the water pump was working. This year the test day is Saturday morning, **12th March** Trevor will be on site from 9:30am (always a good idea to let Trevor know that you are coming, contact details on page 3).

By way of preparation it will save a lot of time (and embarrassment!) if you have first cleaned out the ashpan and smokebox ready for the annual visual inspection.

If the 4 yearly hydraulic test is due it will save a lot of time if you have checked that all the steam valves are seating OK - easily checked with the boiler filled and using the hand pump up to working pressure.

Please bring with you your last boiler certificate and also the blue record card, if you have one.

Our thanks to the Surrey Club members for making this possible

## **2016 visits programme**

In recent years the MOC rally held at Leatherhead in August has consistently been the best attended event on our calendar. We have held other events in various parts of the country to enable Club members who may be local to the area to visit without having to travel too far. Other venues have included:

East Anglia	Norwich
	Saffron Walden
Midlands	Leicester
	Sutton Coldfield
	Derby
South	Worthing

Some of the events have been quite well attended and our Club members have enjoyed their visit and our hosts enjoyed having us. However, the attendance last year was somewhat disappointing leading to the questions - Are we trying to do too much with so many visits - should we concentrate on the most popular venues, are there other parts of country we are missing where we could get a reasonable attendance.

In 2016 we are planning visits to Norwich, Derby, Leatherhead and Worthing (see page 4 for the dates) where, hopefully many of you will be able to join us. If you would prefer to see other venues in the future, please let our Secretary Tony know and we will endeavour to meet your needs.

## Raised track improvements at Leatherhead

Visitors to the MOC Leatherhead rally last August will remember that the raised track was out of commission whilst improvements were being made.

There can be problems with raised tracks unless measures are taken to prevent carriages tipping if a passenger leans out. To eliminate this risk the Surrey Club have decided to concrete all around the track and build a side platform next to the bridges.

The photo below was taken at the MOC Leatherhead rally a couple of years ago and shows the track structure before it was changed.



We have had to dig out the earth around the concrete blocks down to the chalk which is anything from 6" to 10" deep. Then we edge with wooden boards and pour in ready mix concrete and the arches put back into place

We are laying new track using plastic chairs and sleepers with steel rail. Fitting a rail for the 2½" gauge track required some modification of the plastic chairs.

By the time the Maxitrak rally comes around it should all be finished and up and running again. The ride should be much improved, especially in the wet when wheel slip could be a problem on the aluminium rail. Let's hope the sunshine we've enjoyed on our August visits to Leatherhead in recent years continues again in 2016.

Trevor

## Worthing Club celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Following our MOC visit to Worthing last August I visited this very friendly Club again in September when they were celebrating their 40th anniversary. They always make us feel welcome when we have the rally there.

Over those 40 years the hard working Club members have developed a magnificent site on what had been a little used area of a local council park. Progressively the 5" raised track was laid, starting with a single oval enabling public running to start and raise the funds for future extensions. A tunnel, cuttings, embankment and a pedestrian footbridge were added followed steaming bays and unloading facilities.

The Club members then built their own clubhouse, and splendid it is too, that was officially opened in 1992. The members could now hold their regular Club meetings on site but more room was needed. An extension was added to provide workshop/storage space and the members have now built a carriage shed as well. that would become the Club workshop by

Whilst all this building work was going on the track was not forgotten, a system of automatic signalling being installed. The Club members even found time to build a second Club loco needed for the increasingly popular public running.

The 27th September was a lovely sunny day in this part of Sussex, very rewarding for all those Club members who had put in so much preparation for this special day. They had some good exhibits on display in the hall whilst on the track the eight locos, working in two shifts, were kept busy with full loads of passengers on the trains for much of the day.

Below, and on the following page are a selection of photos taken on the day.



Some of the action in the steaming bays as a couple of locos are prepared for their passenger duties. As can be seen above left even 5" gauge locos can be rather large!



Tony our Secretary and Treasurer is also a member of the Worthing Club and had helping on a charity stall raising money for St Barnabas. He was pig racing but don't panic, they are toy pigs - I can't see Tony herding real pigs.



I didn't get a photo but there were 3 traction engines circulating the field and a portable pond was being used by several member's boats together with guests from the local model boating club.

All in all it was a most enjoyable visit and I understand the Club were very pleased with the day, making a handsome donation to the charity.

I'm sure I can speak for all MOC members who have visited Worthing over recent years in wishing the Worthing Club every success for the future, they certainly deserve it given what they have achieved so far. We look forward to seeing them again for our visit this coming August.

Trevor

## Visit to the 2015 Midlands Model Engineering Exhibition

I try to get to this exhibition each year as it focuses on model displays and I enjoy seeing the display of road locos in steam outside the hall.

Alex with the Maxitrak stand were there and were kept busy with lots of visitors. I was particularly attracted to the new BR 04 class diesel with its striking blue livery, this loco is quite heavy (it needs to be if it is to be used for serious passenger hauling) with the superstructure being made from 3mm steel plate. It is chain driven to the jack shaft and looks as if it will be a capable of a lot of hard work, especially if extra batteries are carried in the driving carriage. I am seriously thinking of moving up to 7¼ gauge by buying one of these - if funds allow.



The exhibition had stands for most of the main suppliers that usually attend this venue a few were missing, perhaps relying on mail order these days. The second hall was not as full as it normally is so there was plenty of room to walk around. I guess the cost of running the stand is a deterrent for some.

I was able to take some photographs of a 3 ½ inch gauge Jinty ‘Molly’ on one of the Club stands. I’m also building one of these models from scratch so, seeing a finished model should spur me on to finish mine.

The 10¼” Gauge Society always have a couple of locos on display - this must be a great gauge to operate. If only my garden was big enough to put in a decent length of track! At the other end of the scale the garden railway enthusiast is catered for here with two operating layouts and sales stands.

Outside the halls there were some additional catering outlets where one could relax and watch the miniature traction engines steaming around. There was also a section of raised track where free rides could be had behind a Polly 3 loco. Fortunately the weather was favourable on the day of my visit so I could get a good look at the models in steam.

This is always a good show but personally the Harrogate show in May is my favourite. This year it is moving to Doncaster whilst the exhibition halls are being rebuilt. I see that the 'Model Engineer' sponsored exhibition is moving to Brooklands in September this year. After Ascot and Sandown Park in recent years it will be interesting to see how popular the new venue and date is.



I hope my 'Molly' looks this good when I finally get it finished.



Some of the road locos lining up in the field. Don't they get larger.

Trevor

## Alexandra Palace Model Engineer's Exhibition 2016

I always like to get to this exhibition, normally with a big shopping list even if I strictly don't 'need' anything! I went on Friday 15th January figuring it might not be as busy in the exhibition as it is over the weekend. However, Alexandra Palace is also the venue for a major snooker championship that week so it is advisable, if travelling by car, to get there for when the exhibition opens or soon after.

As well as seeing the trade stands and exhibits, it can also be a very sociable event seeing fellow Club members, even folk from other Clubs that we have met on our visits. This year was no exception, I hadn't been at the show long before I met Jeff and Daphne looking around

The Polly Owner's Club were giving rides on a portable track again, the track being provided by the Ickenham Club. After his 'turn of duty' last year it was good to see Mark Hamlin's 'Victor' on display patiently waiting his turn again. Based on the Ruston 'Starter' chassis disguised as a slate wagon the horse moves its legs as it pulls its load. There is another photo of Victor on page ??

The Chelmsford Club stand had a yellow Planet on display, it's good to see members putting their Maxitrak model up for exhibitions. I was able to look at the model and say to myself 'I've got one of those now, only mine is the red version'



Standing behind the yellow Planet on the stand was a loco of somewhat larger proportions. Studying the photo closely reveals that is a 7¼" petrol-hydraulic loco loosely based on a narrow gauge industrial loco with sideways facing seat - a bit like a Lister Auto Truck. This was the first time the Chelmsford Club have had a stand at the show and they won 'Best Stand in Show' award. A report on their Club web site gives an account of the work and number of people involved to put on such a display.

My attention was drawn to a very nice  $\frac{3}{4}$ " scale traction engine on one of the stands, it turned out to be 'Little Jen', built using the construction articles for 'Little Ben' which appeared in the Model Engineer back in 2001. It made an interesting comparison to the similar sized Maxitrak Allchin. There were also two lovely 4" scale traction engines on the National Traction Engine Trust stand which caught my eye, see the photos below.



I appreciate that the exhibition needs to cater for a wide range of modelling interests - the large display of radio controlled truck models was fascinating to watch. There also seemed to be a great many boat exhibits this year. To be fair to the organisers they have to cover as many aspects of the model engineering hobby as possible to ensure they get a good attendance.

With the increasing costs of running a trade stand and increasing use of mail order perhaps the pattern is changing for these exhibitions - one thing one can't see on the internet are the club displays of models and the conversations with those who have built them. Having said that the hobby seems to be better served than ever with exhibitions across the country.

I notice that next year's exhibition at Alexandra Palace will be one week later on 20th to 22nd January so may avoid the clash with the snooker.

Trevor

Victor ready for another duty



## Speedometer options

Some years ago now I built myself a 7¼” gauge diesel hydraulic loco using a Chinese single cylinder diesel engine coupled to an Eaton 7 hydrostat. I wanted to fit a speedometer and, after some research, did what many others have done which was to use a cycle speedometer that could be calibrated for the tender wheel diameter. I fixed a small magnet to the back of one of the wheels and mounted the sensor to be near the rotating magnet, allowing for vertical axle movement from the suspension. Over the years it has worked extremely well recording current speed and total distance travelled, I’ve travelled over 650 miles, replacing the battery just once I’ve only had one problem with it when I inadvertently trapped the thin wire from the sensor to the display. Easiest solution was to buy another unit for around £10 and was able to keep my original display unit.

In the meantime I tried a wireless system negating the need for the thin wire. Alas the presence of so much metal in the structure of the tender prevented it working.

The loco can frequently be seen in action at Audley End on the Saffron Walden club track where we also have a Club built battery electric loco. This also has a speedometer, in this case a bit more sophisticated as we had an electronics expert in the Club when the loco was built. It uses a motor from a cordless drill as a generator belt driven from the 36v traction motor, coupled to a recalibrated voltmeter it gives an indication of track speed.

One of our Club members runs a battery electric loco (non Maxitrak) that has a built in speedometer that I understand electronically derives the speed from the traction motor. Apart from an interference issue I understand this speedometer is no longer available.

So, when the Club was recently looking for a speedometer for another loco I found myself checking out the prices of cycle speedometers. Imagine my surprise when I came across a GPS enabled device that did not require any connection to the wheels, it was available for just over £60 from a well known high street cycle retailer!

For this price I thought I would buy one for myself and try it out on the driving trolley Daphne and I use with our Planet. I was concerned that it would not be sufficiently sensitive to work when there are trees around but was amazed that first of all it picked up a satellite signal in my breakfast room and later performed admirably on the front seat of my car. It bodes well.

I was recently discussing my latest project with a friend who has a 5” gauge Ruston loco and came to a similar conclusion as myself and went out and got

one himself. The photo below shows it as first fitted to his driving trolley although I understand this position is not ideal so it will probably be repositioned.



As can be seen in the photo the device is a Garmin Edge 200 currently available from Amazon, Halfords or others for less than £70.

The mounting is of course designed for a bike handlebar, so is not suitable for fitting to a flat surface as-is, but all it needs is a 4mm thick packer behind the mount. My friend used two 5BA countersunk head screws at 20mm centres through both the mount and the packing piece.

Coming back to the positioning issues, a few things come to mind:

- It needs to be easily seen by the driver, the initial position shown above is much too close.
- Screen reflections in bright sunlight can be a problem (as I have found with the LCD display on the bike speedometer fitted to my diesel-hydraulic, I sometimes have to shield it with my hand to be able to read the display).
- It needs to be positioned such that it will not get in the way whilst getting on or off the driving trolley
- It will work better if it has a clear view to the sky so tucking away in the cab of the loco would not be ideal

Looking at the reviews of the product on the internet (which are for its intended use on a bike) they are mostly very positive, some are critical of its lack of functionality such as providing a map - not usually an issue when driving one of our models!, linking to the riders pulse rate - again not usually an issues for our drivers! or the calories being burnt off - perhaps this is something we'd rather not know!

Coming back to basics, if you would like to know how fast your model is travelling and the distance covered this may be worth considering. Whether it is worth £70 without the need for wiring is a matter of personal choice.

Jeff

## Building a 5" Gauge SECR Passenger Brake Van Driving Carriage

When I have been running my 5" gauge R1 on my garden railway the rolling stock, which is narrow-gauge style to run with my horse-drawn slate wagon (Maxitrak Starter chassis), has always looked rather incongruous with the standard-gauge R1. As a result I decided it would be nice to make a new driving carriage that was more in keeping both in terms of scale and era. See photo below.



I had an old pair of Maxitrak Plate Frame bogies cluttering up the workshop and a single 6' length of angle iron off an old bed frame, which seemed to be a good starting position.

Due to the length of angle iron available the overall length was (obviously) going to be 3' so I started searching through my

copy of 'A Pictorial Guide to Southern Wagons and Vans' for a suitable prototype vehicle around 32 feet long (using the scale ratio of 1 1/8 inches to the foot given by the track gauge ratio of 5 inches to 4 foot 8 1/2 inches).

Eventually I found a 13-ton guards van built for the SECR (so nicely appropriate for the R1) in 1902 and 1906, which was exactly the right length at 32 feet. Unfortunately this was actually a 6-wheel vehicle but I decided that the use of bogies would be a practical compromise for running with a 12 inch to the foot scale driver on a relatively sharply curving garden railway.

I scanned the 4mm scale drawings from the book and then expanded them to 28.6mm scale by using a succession of enlargements on the office photocopier, carefully assembling the various A3 sheets together to give a full-size photo copier montage. Although this technique is a little crude it provided a very simple guide for cutting out the main panels from 6mm MDF board.

The angle iron was cut in half and welded together to form a chassis frame with short lengths of angle iron welded to the top of the frame to which the plate frames of the bogies would be bolted, see the photo at the top of the following page.

My wife then arranged an informal strength test by inadvertently knocking the frames over when reversing our car into the garage - they promptly fell apart, which at least proved that I needed to brush up my welding skills!



Eventually the frames were complete with a rather nice set of sprung buffers that I purchased, rather than making, to save time.

The main body was then assembled and a start made on the mouldings. Wider sections were made from coffee stirrers liberated from the local coffee shop whilst narrower sections were made from thick card (similar thickness to the coffee stirrers) carefully cut to the correct width on a guillotine.

Each section was then glued to the body sides as shown in the then photo below left.

The rounded fillets in each corner were created by applying a small dollop of Polyfilla in the corner and then using a simple tool (a length of cardboard cut to a suitable radius) to push the filler into the corner, see the photo below right.



The 4 lookout duckets were carefully cut from 12mm thick MDF sheet, sanded to shape and screwed to the side panels (see photo on the right) before the box was painted in the post-war SECR livery, which would have still been in use after the grouping so therefore contemporary with the R1's (albeit fictitious for this class of loco) Southern livery .



The internal cross members are cut from 16mm MDF to provide the necessary support for the roof, which is padded to provide a comfortable seat and removable to provide access to the inside. These cross members have a small cutaway at the top to provide storage for the flue brush.

The body is divided into 3 sections with the rear section intended to hold steaming materials; blower, charcoal, firelighters, coal, matches etc. whilst the largest compartment in the centre is intended to hold tools, oil cans, coupling bars, and all the other junk needed for running a steam loco! The front section of the roof is separately removable to provide access to a coal tray and a water tank (a 4 litre ice cream tub) underneath to supply the R1's injector.

Once I had trial assembled the vehicle with the plate frame bogies bolted to the brackets on the top of the frame I realised that I had made a fundamental error in that the height of the trolley which was much too low to align neatly with the buffer height of the R1. I contemplated getting the angle grinder out to relocate the brackets to the bottom of the side frames but decided to adopt a different approach. I used elongated bolts with a stack of 3 rubber bushes (actually chair leg feet) to lift the body up to a suitable height and to provide a small amount of resilience.

The brakes are the standard ones supplied by Maxitrak for these bogies although I modified them slightly by drilling a 4.5mm diameter hole (tapped to 5mm) next to the cable entry holes to allow a short 5mm bolt to be inserted, to which the brake cable outer sheath is secured with cable ties. This ensures that the inner cable passes tidily through the brake plates perpendicularly.

I am intending to add some detailing such as door handles, handrails and suitable lettering but even without this I am pleased with the end result; it looks so nice tied to the back of 'Areone'.

Mark Hamlin



Mark's award winning 'Victor' seen recently at Alexandra Palace exhibition patiently waiting his next turn on duty giving rides on the Ickenham Club portable track. He certainly attracted a lot of interest, even to the point where he could almost be becoming a celebrity!

## **The Drewry Class 04 at the Wisbech & Upwell tramway**

Having established that the first production versions of the Drewry Class 04 saw service on the Wisbech & Upwell Tramway, at the other end of Cambridgeshire to where I live, I thought the subject warranted further research.

The prototype, DS1173, was built in 1948 and served as a departmental shunter at the Hither Green depot. The first production batch of four locos were built by the Vulcan Foundry in 1952 and numbered 11100-3 (later D2200-3), they were fitted with side skirts and cowcatchers to enable them to work on unfenced roadside track. They differed in detail from later models (and the Maxittrak version) by the rectangular shape of the cab front windows and a different engine exhaust - initially just a hole in the top of the bonnet later fitted with a simple straight pipe. Later batches were also fitted with larger cab side windows.

Two of the 04s were allocated to the W&U replacing the steam trams that had been used on the line - GER class G15 (LNER Y6) 0-4-0s built 1883-97 until superceded by GER class C53 (LNER J70) 0-6-0s built 1903-21. With the introduction of the 04's the W&U had the distinction of being Britain's first all diesel line.

The locos of the W&U have become famous for another reason, that well known 'man of the cloth' who from 1953-65 was the Vicar at Emneth, less than a mile from the line. It is hardly surprising that one of the 04s became known as 'Mavis' working for the fictional Ffarquhar Quarry Company although probably better known is one of the J70s known as 'Toby the Tram engine'.

Another 'man of the cloth' well known as a railway enthusiast is the Rev. Teddy Boston who was Curate in Wisbech St Mary from 1949, later becoming Rector of Cadeby, Leicestershire in 1960 where he built the Cadeby Light Railway. Rev Boston was a close friend of Rev Audrey, not unexpected given their mutual interest in railways. I read that if he needed inspiration for a sermon he would hitch a cab ride in one of the steam tram locos for the journey to Upwell.

Back to the 04s, one of the locos used on the W&U has remarkably survived in to preservation. D2203 can be found at the Emsay & Bolton Abbey Railway in Yorkshire. When retired by BR it passed into industrial service with the Hemel Cement Company before venturing north to Yorkshire. By now devoid of the side skirts and cowcatchers it still retains the boxed in rear steps to prevent feet getting caught in the motion. As the loco is thought to have been the inspiration for 'Mavis' consideration is being given to returning it to that form.

Perhaps a MOC owner might consider creating a 7¼ gauge version of 'Mavis'!

Jeff

## **Southern Federation matters**

For several years now the Maxitrak Owner's Club has been affiliated to the Southern Federation of Model Engineering Societies (Southern Fed). This affiliation has a number of benefits for MOC members, namely the Club can issue boiler certificates for members that are acceptable to insurers and also when visiting model engineering clubs There is access to model insurance tailored to our needs and access to a wealth of information applicable to our hobby.

The word 'Southern' is historical these days as member clubs and societies come from all corners of the United Kingdom.

MOC members who are also members of a local model engineering society that is affiliated to the Southern Fed may already be familiar with the latest Federation news but, it seemed a good opportunity to remind everyone of what is available.

These days we get much of our information from the internet, provided you have a computer of course that has access to the 'world wide web'. The Southern Fed is now very much internet based although Officers of the Federation attend most of the major model engineering exhibitions.

The web site is [www.sfmes.co.uk](http://www.sfmes.co.uk) which I find works best for me using Google Chrome. Old versions of Microsoft Internet Explorer may have problems.

The Southern Fed newsletter is published four times a year and gives details of Federation events, topics of general information and details of any legislation that could affect our hobby.

The AGM is held in March each year, usually at a venue of interest to model engineers, this year it is being held on Saturday 12th March at the National Railway Museum in York. I usually attend this event and give feedback in a following MOC newsletter.

There are two Federations rallies each year, one in the Spring, the other in the Autumn. Dates and venues will be posted on the web site.

Taking a look at the web site one can view a lot of useful information, this includes some 15 Information Sheets and 6 sets of Guidance Sheets. It is also possible to view HSG216, the health and safety guidelines that all model engineering clubs should be following. The web site also gives contact details for Walker Midgley Insurance Brokers who now provide the Federation insurance for those who need it.

Jeff

## Factory news Winter 2016

I have to start with the sad news of the death of my Mum Jane. She regularly attended rallies and exhibitions over the years and was well known to many Maxitrak club members. In recent years ill health had prevented her from coming to many events but she still had the inclination to be there if she could. She saw many changes in her ninety two years!

At the factory we are awaiting the imminent arrival of the next batch of Alice locomotives, they are slightly updated with extra detail compared to the last two batches.

These engines have always been very popular and come at a very attractive price. They are good for those just starting into live steam, or for anyone wanting a smaller 5" gauge locomotive.

Talking of locomotive prices, we have just introduced easy payment terms on all our range of products including second hand items. This is quite flexible and can be tailored to individual needs. You have to put down a deposit of 10% minimum (more will reduce monthly payments), the balance can be repaid in monthly instalments over one, two or more years. It is not possible to give exact figures without getting individual details but it does mean you can have an Alice kit for about £100 a month.

Next to arrive after the Alice will be a second batch of ¾" scale Allchin traction engines. The last batch of one hundred engines sold in pretty short order, so this time we have ordered a bigger batch. We are also getting some conversion sets, to make them into either showman's or crane engines. The showman's engine has a full length canopy with twisted brass supports, a working dynamo sitting on a smokebox extension, a belly tank and a solid flywheel with brass detailing. The crane engine has a half length canopy and a sizeable jib with the hook raised and lowered by a worm and bevel gear drive off the crank shaft.

They will both make interesting prototypes to go with the standard agricultural traction engine. We have also done our own rail conversion on this engine making it in to a chain drive Aveling like the one in the London Transport collection (see the photo on page 23). I put a video of this engine running at Leatherhead on the Maxitrak facebook page, last time I looked about 33,000 people had looked at it!

Following the Allchins we should have a new batch of 5" Planet diesels and the larger version based on the Australian Baldwin sugar cane railway locomotives. This is a sizeable engine with the same running gear as the main line diesels but in a narrow gauge body. Although they are not well known in this country they make a very impressive model.

This is just an outline of the exciting range of engines due for release this year, keep an eye on our advertisements or the web site for updates. Alex and I had a trip to China last September to go over the production schedule, an interesting visit including a trip on one of the new high speed lines spreading across the country. These lines are built on a heroic scale, all new stations, most of them about the size of an airport terminal, as well as all the track and infrastructure. The only thing that was not high speed was waiting for about half an hour to buy a ticket, all seats individually booked! There is a big difference to our approach to building high speed lines, they just get on with it!

Back at Staplehurst we have a good stock for the larger 7¼” gauge locomotives, both the American Forney in tank or tender version and the SE&CR R1 0-6-0. These engines have UK built TIG welded copper boilers so even though we have the mechanical parts in stock there can be a delay on the boiler, give us as much notice as possible on these engines.



Photos above show a ‘big’ R1 in the showroom and a 5” Class 73 in the paintshop, whilst in the workshop the 7¼” Deltic is taking shape and another large steam wagon is being assembled.



We are looking forward to the weather improving for this seasons running and the new range of engines being made available during the year.

Since going part time I have had a chance to get on with my retirement project, a 1924 Ford model T. I did have to put a new engine in the 1935 Austin Seven and finish the restoration of a 1932 Austin Seven joint owned with my son in law, but the Ford is now well under way. It has been in parts in the shed for about eighteen years so it has taken a bit of time to find all the parts and a bit of brain work to remember how it all went together! The fly press at work has come in useful straightening the front axle, track rod and front suspension parts. I had to use an oak beam and a hydraulic jack on the chassis, too big to get on the fly press. I think this car has had a close encounter with something rather solid during it's history.

Just recently I discovered the flywheel magnets are weak, (they should support a two pound weight), so I have to wind myself a re magnetiser. You know you are in for some fun when the instruction for this job include the following kit of parts, a compass, a steel bar, 100ft of cable, three 12 volt car batteries and three sets of jump leads.

The car then needs to be parked facing east/west, this is so you can use the compass to establish north and south poles on the flywheel magnets without getting confused by the earths north pole! The wire is then wound tightly round the metal bar to make a strong electric magnet when batteries are connected up. The compass comes in again to check polarity for this magnet. The magnetiser is put along side the magnet with the polarity correct and given a dose of 36 volt power from the batteries to restore the magnetic power. Wish me luck with this job, sometimes steam power sounds easier!

Andy



A photo of the Aveling chain drive loco, taken from the web site of the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre, Quainton Road.

A similar loco, once at the Bluebell Railway before moving to Quainton Road then to Chinnor and again to Shackerstone. In January 2015 it moved again to Rushden.

The loco is also the basis for another in the 'Thomas the Tank Engine' series - 'Fergus' the Railway Traction Engine.

## 7¼” gauge SE&CR R1 loco



This long lived class of tank engines started life in the 1880s as the South Eastern R class, designed by James Sterling, some 25 being built. In 1899 Harry Wainwright took over as Chief Mechanical Engineer of a combined SE&CR and LC&DR, he set about rebuilding some of the older engines including the R class tank engines.

The model faithfully reproduces this engine in 7¼”gauge, with all the style and Victorian elegance of the original. It has a copper TIG welded boiler with both hand and crosshead pumps. There is a screw regulator mounted in the smoke box. Steam from the boiler is superheated and then fed into a cast iron cylinder block mounted between the frames.

There are two cylinders with piston valves operated by Stephenson’s valve gear. A displacement lubricator is mounted under the front footplate, other fittings include whistle, water and pressure gauges, blower, boiler blow down etc.

Key dimensions:

Length 1208mm, Width 318mm, Height 503mm  
Weight 118kg (dry)

### **MAXITRAK LIMITED**

10/11 Larkstore Park, Lodge Road, Staplehurst, Kent TN12 0QY

Tel: +44(0) 1580 893030 Fax: +44(0) 1580 891505

Email: [info@maxitrak.co.uk](mailto:info@maxitrak.co.uk) Web site: [www.maxitrak.com](http://www.maxitrak.com)