

Steaming Ahead



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SCMES is to host next years Midlands Federation Rally, the provisional date for this is Sunday 19th July 2009.

This year's Midland Federation Rally will be at Burton on Trent MES on 13th July. We need to encourage as many of our members to attend as possible – with locos (or whatever) if possible. When we have staged the event in the past, at Balleny Green, we have always had a very good turnout. Sunday the 13th July is clear as far as SCMES events, we will have had the SCRS visit on Saturday the 12th so it's a good excuse for us all to have a day out. More information will be in the June Steaming Ahead.

AUCTION NIGHT

Time for as clear out, Tuesday 22nd April is Auction Night -

this will be at Balleny Green in the Marque—tea and coffee will be served in the club house through the evening.

Traditionally this auction is to sell donated items to raise club funds but as last time, if you have something that you want us to auction on a commission basis we will do that. The marquee will be put up in the morning so items for auction can be put in during the afternoon. Please note all sold and unsold items must be removed from site by the end of the night.

Sutton Coldfield Railway Society's Exhibition

Sat 26th & Sun 27th April: this is being coordinated by Peter McMillan who has left a board

in the club house for all to volunteer display models or time to man the stand. This is a regular event for us and generates a lot of interest in both model engineering and our club. Also, we usually manage to gain one or two new members as well as generating interest in our own events: Garden Party, Bonfire night & Santa Specials. So please put your name down or contact Peter, if only for a couple of hours - it all helps.

Slight format change

You will note that we have changed the format slightly the address is now at the top of the front page this is to speed up the folding and packing process, only one fold.

Events This Month—APRIL

Sunday 20th April Birthday Party

Tuesday 22nd April Auction Night

Sat 26/Sun 27 Sutton Coldfield Railway Society's Exhibition

Dates for Your Diary

Mon 05 May 2008 Bank Hol Steam Up

Sat 10 May 2008 Steam Up

Sun 11 May 2008 Birthday Party

Tues 20 May 2008 Steam Up with Faggots & peas

Mon 26 May 2008 Bank Hol Steam Up

This news letter will only work with your input

SEQLEC 2008

All Seven and a Quarter Gauge Loco Owners.

The Langford and Beeliegh (miniature) Railway just outside MALDON in ESSEX, will be hosting this years "Seven and Quarter Loco Efficiency Competition", over the W/E 19th/20th July.

Take your loco (standard or NG) and have the chance to see how well she goes on their 1/4 mile main line circuit. (60' radius curves, laid to Society Standards).

Situated in the gardens of a preserved Steam Pumping Station www.museumofpower.org.uk so plenty to see and do besides running your engine and keeping an eye on the competition.

STEAM OIL

Your society has obtained a quantity of steam oil which is available to members at a 'special' price of just £1.50 per pint.

There are two grades: Grade 460 for 2½", 3½" & small 5" gauge locomotives, and Grade 680 for large 5" gauge locos, and all 7¼" gauge locos.

If you wish to purchase any of the above, please contact Neal Harrison.

Subscription Renewals

The Board have decided that this year Membership Subs will only be increased for Junior Members £11.00 to £15.00. All other types will remain the same as last year, namely:-

Seniors	£45.00
Full	£55.00
Associate	£15.00
Friends	£15.00

Please remember that subs which are unpaid by the time of the A.G.M. in June will render such members ineligible to vote on any issues arising.

If any subs renewals are outstanding after the A.G.M. they will carry a surcharge of £10.00 to cover the administration costs of reminder letters, etc.

MARCH 2008 "HORT" AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

March started well with quite a number of early arrivals eager to start but not only because Garry had organised a large delivery of ballast for 9.00am. It was interesting to see the driver manoeuvre the 8 wheel/4 axle truck through the gates. The pile

of ballast is impressive but will quickly go down as the first sections of the outer ground level track are laid.

The small 'hort' team (Grenville, Vic and Myself) started work replacing the stepping slabs from the access track to the club house patio. We retrieved slabs from the lower copse and by lunch had completed half the distance with a double row of 2'0" x 2'0" slabs in place of the widely spaced 2'0" 1'6" small slabs. This makes it easier for all but in particular wheelchair access.

Dave's group started lifting the old track from the point into the carriage shed; the old ballast was dug out and spread around the maintenance store to improve the levels and surface. While Ron made a start on preparing the carriages for the final coat of paint (cleaned down by Graham the previous week), Bob (B) was working on signal electrics and Stuart and John electrics in the maintenance store.

Lunch was well earned by everyone and Mike (B) made the soup accompanied with nibbles and nice crusty rolls for dunking!!!!!!

Saturday saw a good turn out for the weekend work party lifting and relaying the track; including Steve (H), Chris, John(C) both Allans, Anthony(LH), Garry, Steve(W), Bill, David(S), Myself, Bob, Graham, Mike(Birk), Mike(Brof). Very good progress was made and we left at about 5.00 pm, as the promised rain started. A few

Copy dates for future news letters:-

Tuesday 22nd April for May
 Tuesday 27th May for June
 Tuesday 24th June for July

This Months Quote:

"Experience is simply the name we give our mistakes."

Oscar Wilde

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feet of old ballast remained to be cleared, the new ballast was in place and 'wackered' to within about 35 feet of the level crossing and 13 track panels had been laid.

Sunday with Dave and Garry on site the remaining work was completed and the new track linked up to the old at the level crossing. In all a fantastic weekends work taking up all the old ballast, laying a new plastic membrane, spreading new ballast, not least installing 24 new track panels and connecting up to the old track at the maintenance store point and level crossing.

Second Tuesday saw the 'hort' team complete the slabbing of the path between the drive and club patio. A long overdue item now crossed off the list of jobs which benefits everyone and not least access for our wheelchair visitors.

Garry and a small team topped up the ballast, made final adjustments and commenced testing which proved to be exciting. Meanwhile Fred had started drilling the next lot of sleepers in the maintenance store alongside Stuart and John doing further safety electrical work. Another well attended Tuesday with around twenty members present looked after at lunch time with Ivor's soup.

Tuesday 18th started with only a handful of members initially but by lunch time we were up to nearly 20 again. Grenville commenced mowing with the self propelled mower and I, with help from John (R), cleared combustible rubbish from the maintenance store and the lower copse.

There was quite a lot of activity in and around the maintenance store --- Garry, Chris, Stuart and John (W) worked moving racks and valuable/usable items to the shed. Other items of scrap were added to the growing pile in the south

east corner. Please don't add to the pile but if you should find anything of use help yourselves – there is a NO RETURNS policy.

With the grass now beginning to show signs of needing attention I blew up the tyres on the lawn tractor and pushed it outside to check it over. Topped up with oil it required a 'jump start' to get it going due a low battery having stood over winter.

It started well but two problems, first a broken spring to the brake cut out switch and faulty switch and second it was not possible to select any gear. I got a new switch and Mike (Br) took on the job of sorting out both faults. Having installed the new switch sprayed with WD 40 and a few squirts from the oil can Mike had it running OK. All that remains is to fit the new drive belt obtained last year.

With the new track in place to the level crossing Fred continued drilling sleepers for the next track section helped by Peter in the main store; again, alongside Stuart and John doing clearing, sorting and electrical work.

Bill arrived with the ballast cleaning machine on which he's had to replace the old petrol engine with a new Honda. He gave a demonstration and with help from a small group took it to be securely locked up in the maintenance store area.

On the loco side Bill(B) and David (O) brought their engines; David for a boiler test on his 14xx – checked and passed by Neal and Steve(W).

Last Tuesday in the month, Easter gone and the clocks due to go back this coming weekend. I missed going to BG over Easter due to family commitments so look elsewhere for comment on what went on.

Grenville and I tackled the conifer

hedge adjacent to the level crossing with some very welcome help from the two Jims and Mac. I personally believe the hedges either side of the crossing create a dangerous situation and that they should not be there for safety reasons. I don't know whose idea it was but it prevents train drivers, approaching the crossing, from having a clear view and is the most dangerous point on the ground level tracks. I know it's normal to have a society member manning the crossing during events but even then there are times when it's not manned and certainly not during normal society days. The sounder does help reduce the risk.

Garry with Dave and three or four others looked at the proposed line of the next section of track to be laid. This will require some extra muscle so if anyone has a contact for a mini digger to loan or hire at an advantageous price, in other words – cheap, please let Dave or Garry know.

Following this Garry resumed clearing the SE end bay of the maintenance store, which by the time I left, was almost clear. Ron continues the rubbing down and painting of the carriages. Meanwhile Dave was sorting out the hydraulic lift together with Allan(L) and Mike(Brof) who were re-securing the tread plate by the gates.

At the other end of the site Allan (D), Neal and Peter were trying out Bills ballast cleaning machine in the turning bay. If anyone needs some very fine potting soil then have a word with them, they have barrows full.

Finally, it's nice to see the daffodils doing so well and hopefully by this time next month all the hedges will have greened up and the bare winter look gone until the end of autumn.

Eric Davies 25th March 2008

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS & EVENTS FOR 2008

(All meetings are at Balleny Green unless otherwise indicated)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Event Co-ordinator</u>	<u>Time</u>
Sun 06 April 2008	Steam Up		10am onwards
Sat 12 April 2008	Steam Up		1pm onwards
Sun 20 April 2008	Birthday Party		2-4pm
Tues 22 April 2008	Auction Night	Steve Whitson	7pm
Sat 26 April 2008	Sutton Coldfield Railway Society's Annual Exhibition	Peter Mc	10am-5pm
Sun 27 April 2008	At Bishop Walsh School, Sutton Coldfield	Peter Mc	10am-5pm
Mon 05 May 2008	Bank Hol Steam Up		10am onwards
Sat 10 May 2008	Steam Up		1pm onwards
Sun 11 May 2008	Birthday Party		2-4pm
Tues 20 May 2008	Steam Up with Faggots & Peas supper		6pm
Mon 26 May 2008	Bank Hol Steam Up		10am onwards
Sun 01 June 2008	Steam Up		10am onwards
Sun 08 June 2008	Barber Shop Slingers		
Sat 14 June 2008	AGM & Steam Up & BBQ		
Sun 22 June 2008	Erewash Valley MES Visit		All day
Tues 24 June 2008	Traction Engine Night with Jacket Potatoes		6pm
Sun 29 June 2008	Birthday Party		2-4pm
Sun 06 July 2008	Steam Up		10am onwards
Sat 12 July 2008	Steam Up & SCRS Visit		1pm onwards
Sun 13 July 2008	Midland Federation Rally at Burton on Trent		
Tues 22 July 2008	Stationary Engines with Bring & Share buffet Tea		6pm
Sun 03 August 2008	Steam Up & National 2½" Gauge Rally		10am onwards
Sun 10 August 2008	Garden Party		
Sat 16 August 2008	Astronomical Society		1pm onwards
Tues 19 August 2008	Steam Up & BBQ		6pm
Mon 25 August 2008	Bank Hol Steam Up		10am onwards
Sun 07 September 2008	LBSC Memorial Trophy		10am onwards
Sat 13 September 2008	Steam Up		1pm onwards
Tues 23 September 2008	Steam Up with Fish & Chip Supper		6pm
Sat 27 September 2008	L&NWR Visit		All day
Sun 05 October 2008	Steam Up & Birthday Party (2-4pm)		10am-4pm
Sat 11 October 2008	Steam Up		
Tues 21 October 2008	Speaker: TBA	Shenstone	
Sun 2nd Nov 2008	Steam Up		
Sat 8th Nov 2008	Bonfire Night		
Sat 15th Nov 2008	Steam Up		
Tues 27th Nov 2008	Speaker: TBA	Shenstone	
Sun 7th & 14th Dec 2008	Santa Special's		
Tues 16th Dec 2008	Christmas Party	Shenstone	