

Dear Member,

Quite a month - with our delayed AGM, guard training, the re-commissioning of the raised track (for members' use, and later for other clubs) with good progress on many other projects. More 'Ease In' running for the public and our ever popular 'Narrow Gauge' weekend - all in just a month @ RMES!

Edward reports on club loco 'Netta':

"Veteran club loco 2116 "Netta" has had a little bit of work done recently following experience from her last run two year's ago - thanks Covid.... A sunny summer evening presented an opportunity to try her out, pleased to say successfully if somewhat oily, and the extended track gave her a real opportunity to stretch her wheels."



Photo: Edward Parrott

Our AGM took place for the second year running outdoors due to the government ruling in force for COVID. This was well attended and the weather managed to stay fine for us despite an uncertain forecast.



On the morning of the AGM we held our guard training session which was well attended. It is important to keep all our duty staff up-to-date especially with the changes to our signalling system and the new layout through the old station. The session was headed up by Holly Parrott who was assisted by Rolf Thomas – many thanks to you both.



Photo: Tony McGeechan



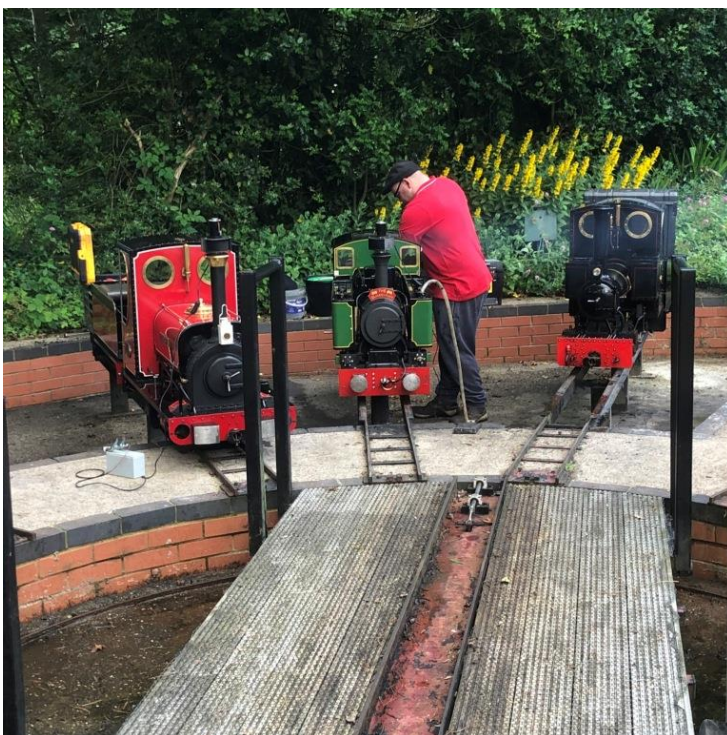
The next day saw our members running and for the first time this year the raised track was available for use with the full extension. Unfortunately, I'm sure due to a poor weather prediction, the turnout of members was disappointing. In the event the weather stayed fine so those who did come had the newly extended track to themselves! The photo shows Ian Clipston making the most of the extended track with his loco pulling a nice rake of waggons.



Work has been progressing on the raised track station with Geoff Broad and helpers getting the shuttering in position for the first delivery of mixed concrete for the staff side of the station. The photo shows the shuttering in place – thanks Geoff!



The first event for visiting engines was held on the second weekend of the month for 'Narrow Gauge' locos. This was kindly hosted by Edward Parrott and his helpers, many thanks to you all. I understand that our visitors had an enjoyable weekend with many staying overnight from Friday onward.



Some of our visitors getting ready to steam up on the Sunday.



A new visitor was this rather nice model of a 'Double Fairlie' locomotive which was photo'd ready to be steamed in our steaming bay.



A frequent visitor to the narrow gauge event is this 'Darjeeling' loco and its owner Gordon Roberts, who has recently joined us – welcome aboard Gordon!



The following Wednesday saw the delivery of our first 'pour' of concrete for the new raised track station. We used a supplier who mixed the concrete on site so that we only pay for the amount we need – important with the current high price of cement! The photo shows the truck backing down to the side of the track ready to chute the mix into the shuttering.



Geoff and some of the helpers waiting in anticipation!



Alex Bouchard and Geoff Broad operating the tamping bar whilst Peter Barnett tries to remove any excess ahead of them. With Tony McGeechan following up with his trusty float to get into the awkward corners!



In just under an hour the whole strip was laid with Alex and Geoff seen finishing off the last panel.



On the same day Dave Webster had a 'production line' going producing fencing panels for the new station. He is seen producing yet another panel in the sunshine – thanks Dave!



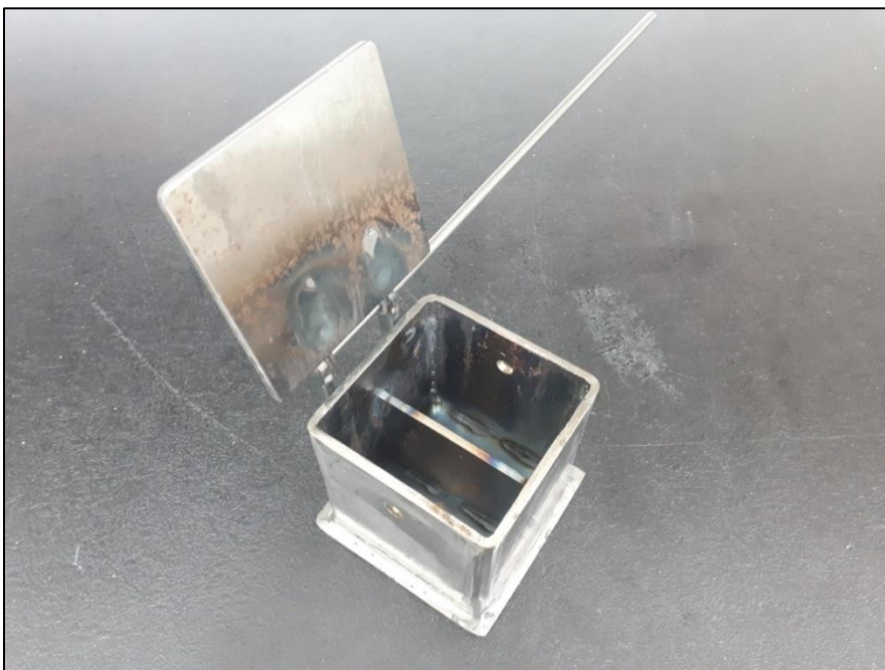
Edward has been busy at his home workshop:

"During the last running of my Romulus "Myglyd" before it's second steel boiler was condemned, it became apparent that the mechanical lubricator had ceased to function.....again.... As the boiler needed replacing I didn't bother doing anything about it, and then forgot all about it in the rush of work to get it rebuilt and ready for public running at the start of 2020....less said about that the better I think. Now that I have rearranged life priorities and have more time on my hands I can finally do something about it.

My preference is for separate mechanical lubricators for each cylinder, with their own tank of oil, that way you know straight away if one cylinder is not receiving oil. On club engine "Dr John" we achieved this by fitting two Foster lubricators from Live Steam Models, without doubt the best lubricators on the market provided you have a big enough engine to carry them. Drawback for me was that I only wanted one lubricator, and nobody makes a twin tank twin pump lubricator, so I'm making my own. One of the reasons for not wanted two lubricators or Foster branded lubricators was in advance of the needed for my Manning Wardle, which has started making progress again. I'm using my Romulus as a test bed for that, and the club Scot also needs a new lubricator, so it'll be a test bed for that too.

The body is laser cut steel - of course 😊 - and includes a partition down the middle. Each side should hold about the same amount of oil as the single tank currently does. Now the tank is done I will make a pair of Jim Ewins type pumps.

Photos: Edward Parrott



This is the last job that needs doing now having fixed the steam pump, made a new larger water tank so we can do a whole circuit, and fitted a new boiler. If I'd known Covid was going to cause so many problems I would have given her a repaint, but that's going to have to wait a while now"



We had a quiet Saturday and a busy Sunday for our July public running weekend. The weather was very hot so the shorter (2 hour) sessions were very welcome. Although restricted numbers, our public enjoyed their experience and lack of queuing in the hot sun was a bonus! You can see by the photo that the sunshade (thanks Rolf!) was the place to be at the new station on the Sunday afternoon!



Photo: Alex Bouchard



An update on home workshop progress from Peter Hill:

"Florence Hunslet 0-4-2 diesel 7.25" NG

Work has progressed towards finishing and she has appeared at the track a couple of weekends putting out signals and shunting locos to and fro steaming bays and shed.

Chris spent a lunch break painting orange lining outside the sheds. And I applied some vinyl numbers and tender RVR . I had some reservations as to the height but the loco is 1/2 full size!



Photo: Peter Hill

I started on fitting the vacuum brake pump and pipe work. The pump was a used vehicle item first fitted to our Margwen Alice class Hunslet 0-4-0 , but made redundant by the fitting of a PNP steam ejector.



However the pump had seized and seeing no way in I attacked with a disc cutter slicing off the motor can and drilling out the crankcase cover rivets.

Photo: Peter Hill



What a mess. It's been 1/2 full of water. Basically it's well made twin diaphragm pump with a four brush high torque low revs motor.



A soak in a bucket of various cleaners and an 80psi airline got it clean and freed up. The ferrite magnet pole-pieces carefully lined up and all went back together. I tack welded the motor can cuts and bingo it ran purrfectly. Refitted it was piped up and a 3 way brake valve fitted. I used airline swivel joints to get it all aligned in the cab.

On test we had an irritating vacuum leak so the 25"Hg would not hold. The pump is on a momentary dashboard push button as it's envisaged only a few seconds pump will evacuate a trains brakes. The leak was narrowed down to the new airline swivel joints. I pointed out to Aubyn (a well known pipework expert) who questioned the swivel joint seals could be feathered the wrong way for vacuum (not "O" rings) I'm making up fixed pipe connections to replace.

Florence has now got a shiny alloy chequer foot and drop plate, also soon to have a flip dicky seat for extra young drivers.

Photos: Peter Hill

#### BSC Marina 3.5" 2-6-0

With the opening of the raised track thoughts turned to re commissioning Marina. I built in the 1980's and was extensively run at meetings on various tracks. It was also driven a lot by my 3 children (well the two that were interested)!





We ran it at Rugby when first moving here but needed new pistons and lubricator - just worn out. Chris undertook this but after it's hydraulic and steam test it's largely been on a shelf as the new pistons seem to be too tight. Over this week I discovered the new lubricator roller clutch was fitted round the wrong way so it was blowing bubbles in the reservoir and causing the new pistons to run dry. My error as I did not realise pump had to run clockwise. Now reassembled and oil on the workshop ceiling we are ready for a new cert and raised track opening.



Narrow Gauge weekend:

We ran Margwen and Florence

camping over both days . Chris also brought his SM32 radio controlled mini Florence with some coaches running on the track in the car park



Photos: Peter Hill (inset: Peter Featherstone)



Back to the raised track new station and here Geoff and his helpers have been busy putting up more shuttering ready for the next 'pour' of concrete. It looks as if we are nearly ready to go!



In a busy month our next weekend was taken up with the raised track 'Grand Opening'. We had many visitors over the two days and despite an indifferent weather forecast it stayed fine for us. We had good feedback from our visitors with some staying overnight and enjoying our camping facilities. The photo shows one of our visitors putting his 'Sweet Pea' through its paces!

Photo: Paul Ingram



Whilst another visitor was enjoying running his 'Class 66'



Back in the steaming bay Paul spotted a rather nice Midland "Spinner"



And RMES member Ian Clipston busy steaming up!

Photos: Paul Ingram



We also had a visitor with a 2½" locomotive, a rather nice LMS 'Duchess'. As far as we are aware this is the first loco of this gauge to complete a full circuit of the extended raised track. The photo shows the loco and owner having completed a 'lap'!



Still the same day, the ground level track was also not without its 'firsts'. Mike Williams had brought along his latest build a 0-6-0 + 0-6-0 'Kitson-Mayer' type locomotive. This was here for its boiler certification (Hydraulic and steam tests). Mike is seen busy steaming the loco for the first time – with an audience of well-wishers!

Photos: Tony McGeechan





Whilst the tracks were in use by our visitors we took the opportunity to start putting in some of our new trackside signage. The discs and lettering were obtained by Geoff Broad, metal posts by Fred Moon and painted by Mike Sears. So a real team effort – see the photo of the first new post 'planted'!



On the last work session of the month Steve Bouchard is seen busy arranging rubble into nice patterns ready for our next pour of concrete on the new raised track station!

Photo: Peter Featherstone



We are pleased to welcome the following members who have recently joined:

*Peter Finch* and *Sue Morgan* – as full members

*Gordon Roberts* and *Trevor Causton* – as country members

*Adam* and *Ben Morgan* – as junior members

We hope they will all have a long and happy involvement with the society!

I leave you with photos of our two station gardens that look splendid at the moment. All thanks to Sandra Burchell for the Old Station and Alex Bouchard for the new station – Thanks Ladies!



Photo:  
Peter Featherstone

Quite a lot achieved this month, thanks to all those who helped with our projects and to those who made our events such a success!

Note: All photos by the author unless otherwise credited.

Howard Brewer (Secretary)

31 July 2021