

Dear Member,

Welcome to our August Newsletter

August has swept by in a blaze of record heat and dry weather at RMES. Amidst the long, sun-soaked days, we've enjoyed a lively **standard gauge weekend**, hosted a couple of cheerful **children's parties**, and the public have been treated to two **Public Ride Days**.

Behind the scenes, our teams have been working tirelessly — keeping on top of essential maintenance while ensuring that fire safety remains front and centre during the hot spell.

This month's newsletter features updates from around the site (**p3 & 4**), standard gauge weekend (**p5 - 7**), the public ride days (**p8 & 9**) as well as the latest happenings from Peter Hill (**p10 - 15**) and another lookback to the summer of 2016 from Howard (**p16 & 17**).

Regular features can also be found:

Chairman's Line – An update from Rolf (**p2**).

Whistle Stop — This month our quick-fire Q&A is with Sandra Burchell (**p19 - 20**).

Notices – Please take the time to read through our important notices for this month too (**p21 - 23**).



Additional water stations have been added around the site to ensure fire safety this month.

Photo Credit: Dawn Culling

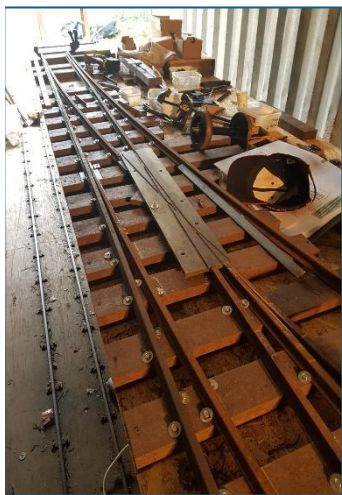
Chairman's Line

Steam Ban

It was very frustrating to have to cancel steam operations at the last minute for our mid-August public ride event. Even though the official wildfire risk on the Sunday was actually no higher than it had been for any of our previous events, the government warning that blared out of all of our mobile phones on the Friday evening was hard to ignore and would have been even harder to explain to our visitors had we done so.

In the end, the non-steam, limited capacity event was a sell-out and well received by our passengers. Well done to all concerned for the rapid re-arrangement of loco and crew rosters.

Making a point



Progress continues to be made on the tandem left-hand point for the new ground level carriage storage container. Those who have made personal visits to the container will have seen that a flangeway plate is being used for the very centre of the point where number of the running lines either cross or are very close together. All the point blades have now been made and attention is now moving to the check rails and point levers.

2026 MMEE

The club is making a return to the Midlands Model Engineering Exhibition this year where we will have a modestly sized stand. A number of members have offered to exhibit their models – some complete, others still a 'work-in-progress' and we will be displaying something from the club too. We are including all gauges and also something that floats! If you are planning to visit the exhibition (October 15th-18th) do drop by our stand and say hello.

Rolf

Track update

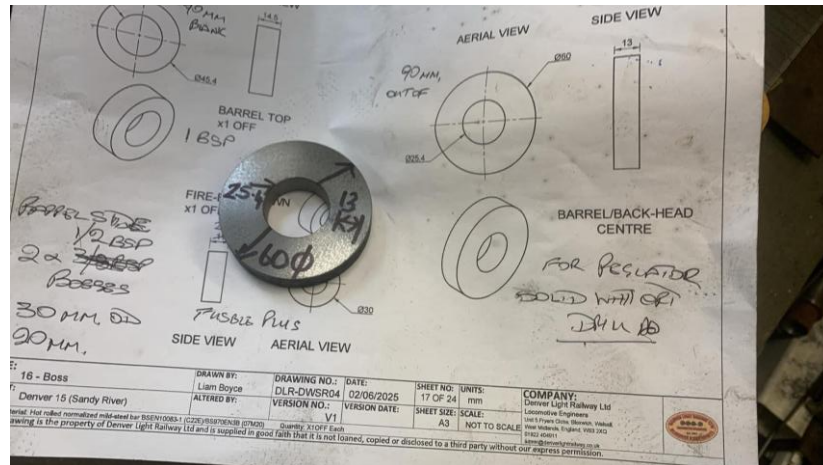
As Rolf mentioned in "Chairmans line" and as can be seen in the picture below, there has been good progress made on the Tandem Point this month. We hope that it will soon be finished ready for installation.

Photo credits in this section: Howard Brewer



Engineering Update

Photo Credits on this page: Martin Rose



Martin has been machining a "Barrel back-head centre" for the Baldwin boiler.



And machining foundation ring for the Baldwin.



Foundation rings complete!

Standard gauge event

Everyone had a great time at the Standard Gauge event this month, thanks so much to everyone who helped to make it such a success.

Photo credits in this article John Nelson and Howard Brewer





Thanks so much to the team who looked after us very well!



August Public Ride Days

Families have been treated to two Public Ride Days in August. Due to the hot dry weather and increased risk of fire the event on the 16th August was dedicated to diesel and electric trains with everyone having a wonderful time. The welcome recent rain meant that steam was able to make a return to the Bank Holiday event on 30th.

Many thanks once again to everyone who helped out at both these events and worked really hard to ensure that our visitors had a very enjoyable and safe experience.

Photo credits in this section: Howard Brewer, Conor Bevan and Millie Culling



Criccieth Castle on its first public running - Phil Hancock in charge



Member Brian Parker with his steam outline battery electric, Brian stood in at short notice to help us out.

Rufus with Tony McGeechan in charge



Florence doing well with Adam Morgan in charge.

Shooey, doing sterling service with Martin Rose at the controls.

We had quieter sessions on the second ride day, but everyone had a fantastic time!



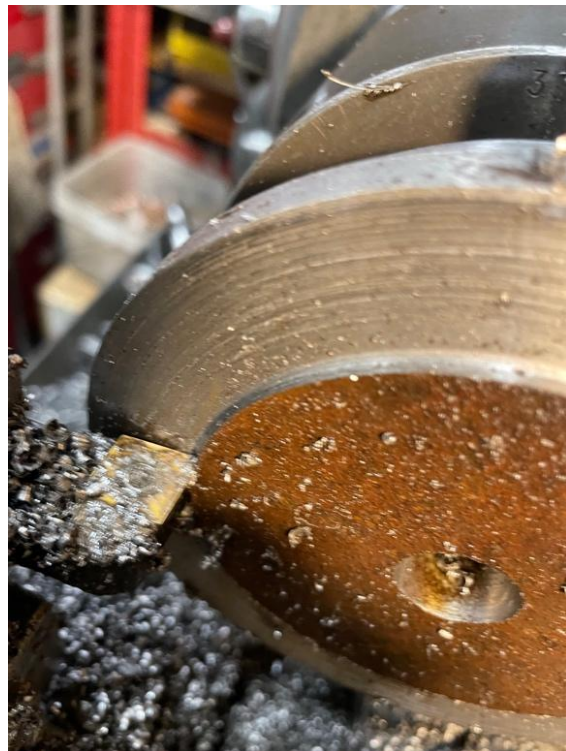
Scribblings for August 2026

By Peter Hill (including all photo credits)

A hot sunny and dry August saw a number of camping trips, including one in the New Forest ending with a midnight de camp following a wild fire spreading. Got home safely in the early hours.

The excessive heat curtailed welding and metal bashing in the fabrication shed so no further progress with the 4" scale quarry trucks.

However, the workshop was cooler, so I attacked the hard steel wheel blanks for 7.25" NG that I got from a friend 30 years ago. I managed to get machining at a very low speed but heavy cut. HSS tool bits soon gave up, and brazed carbide tips broke off. The indexed carbide insert tips lasted longer with a reasonable finish.



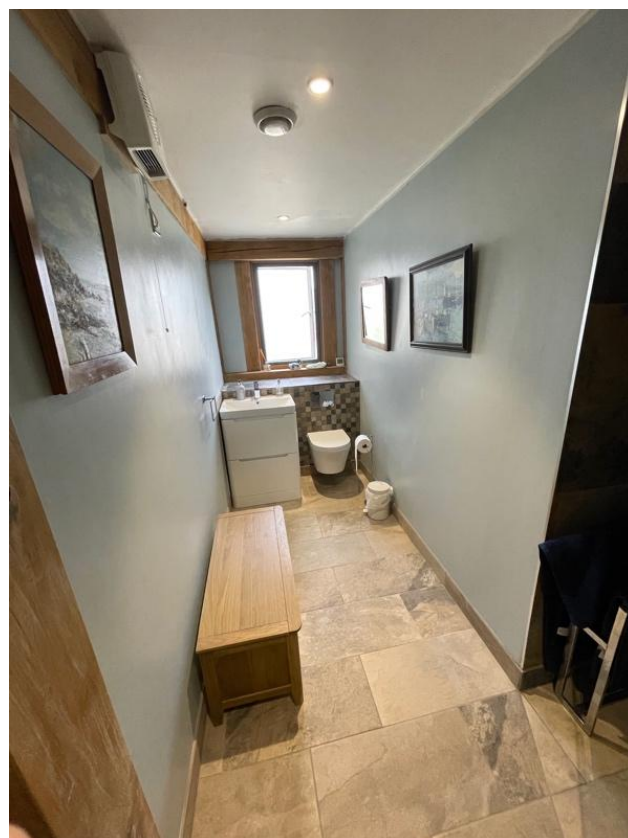


Most of the metal seemed to end up in the swarf bucket. 3 done one more to go!



Meanwhile I got the downstairs cloakroom and shower rebuild finished. When building the house 10 years ago we fitted a quick cheap bathroom while we lived in the caravan and got on with the rest of the house. Now it's time to fit a quality downstairs one for future living. Silent loo and walk-in digital shower!

Also, a hot air blower for chilly mornings.



On a Saturday morning session, I discovered Martin working on his 7.25" "CLISHAY" DeWinton type coffee pot tram loco. A lot further on now.

The boiler is sited on the chassis and the various tanks being rivetted up. I was intrigued by his multiple gas burner that has taken a lot of experimentation.



On the club raised track signalling we have had the hot sun expand the steel rails so much that the butt ends of insulated rail joints have squeezed out the insulation and electrically shorted sections together.



John Thomas and I have been around the whole raised track cutting down the ends with a grinder to give a 1mm gap, into this we have pressed some pieces of 1mm tufnol sheet securing with glue to form a robust insulated break. This seems to have done the job, and all the sections now seem to work ok.



John has also finished building up the MK2 printed circuit boards, all 30 of them! He has designed these so one can easily replace all the discrete wiring in a head if and when one goes faulty. Anyone can swap over the PCB as all the connections are screwed and have labelled terminals.

From the Archives: A Lookback to Summer 2016

Some lookbacks to July / August in 2016



Scrappy first came into service - built by Mike Williams from left over parts (thus the name) - has given us Stirling service between repairs.



Bernard Crowe's GWR 'King' having its steam test. Bernard has since moved away from Rugby but is still an honorary RMES member.



Points being put in to give us alternate routes.



First person over the 'short route' was Doug Pell (left) with his loco!



The late Brian Walton was finishing off the original roof of CS2 just 10 years ago!

Congratulations to Kai!

A huge congratulations to Kai Bevan, who has achieved an exceptional set of results in his A-levels — *three A grades and an A, along with a **Distinction*** in BTEC Engineering. An incredible accomplishment and thoroughly well-deserved.

As he begins the next stage of his journey with an **Engineering degree at Warwick University** next month, we'll be seeing a little less of him at RMES. Although we'll certainly miss having him around as often, we couldn't be prouder.

Kai has been part of the railway for many years, often alongside brothers Conor and Rhys, and Grandad Tony, gaining hands-on experience and learning from members across the club. It has been a pleasure watching him grow in confidence, skill, and knowledge during his time with us.

We wish him every success as he starts this exciting new chapter at Warwick — and we can't wait to hear what comes next.

Good luck Kai!



The Whistle Stop: A monthly Q&A with one of our members

This month the tough questions are posed to Sandra Burchell



Tell us about your professional background.

I acquired shorthand and typing skills at school. On leaving school I worked in a Solicitors Office dealing with Wills, Conveyancing and Court Summons.

After getting married and having my children I returned to work in Daventry at Kohen Windsor who packed spare car parts for Ford Motor Co. I did general office work and was the first to use a computer there for carton and packaging items. I also did the wages later. I was with them for 23 years until the contract moved to D.K. Packing in Long Lawford Rugby where I again controlled the cartons and packing. This only lasted 1 year before the contract moved again. I found further employment in Daventry before retiring early to look after Bryan as well as my disabled daughter Lorraine.

How did you first get into model railway engineering?

We moved into our house in Daventry when our daughter Karen was only 14 days old and Bryan immediately started planning a "OO" railway layout in the back garden which was called Daventry Garden Railway and had lots of coverage from Newspapers, TV and Magazine articles. Little did I realise how much I would enjoy getting involved.

When did you join RMES?

April 2007 - Bryan joined and I was an Associate member. I became a full member in 2011.

What do you enjoy most about being part of the society

The various jobs I have undertaken over the years and the companionship of all the other members even during some difficult moments.

What RMES activities are you known for?

Booking and attending children's parties, 5" loco driver, guard, tickets, refreshments, and gardening.

What has been your favourite locomotive experience?

Driving our 5" Hymek locomotive.

What is your preferred gauge?

I enjoy all gauges

Do you have any hobbies or clubs outside RMES?

I am Chairman of the Daventry Townswomens Guild, I am a member of the U3A, am Trustee of Signpost and Water for Wellbeing. I enjoy knitting, sewing, gardening and DIY.

Tell us about last Heritage Railway that you visited

The Ravenglass and Eskdale railway.

Please tell us one thing about you that no-one at RMES would know

Bryan wanted to go to Spain for our first holiday abroad and I asked if we would be driving or would we go by train, he said we would fly, I replied I do not like heights and did not want to fly, so I was informed it was either fly or stay at home on my own. Of course I said I would fly!



Saturday 23rd March 2013. Sandra says "we got up on the morning to find about 3 inches of snow. We had a birthday party booked between 2 and 4pm. We put our 5" Hymek loco on the track but it would not clear it so... hence the photo. We had a lovely party with Bryan and Mervyn driving."



Sandra on a trip at the CN Tower Toronto in Canada in 2024.

Notices and Updates

We have just 3 public days left this season, so please do encourage everyone to come and join us for the remainder of the season.

Email rmes.sec@hotmail.co.uk if you can help out at any of these sessions.

We also are always welcome to see volunteers to help with the Parties that we host, please contact Sandra if you can help out at all.

RAINSBROOK VALLEY RAILWAY

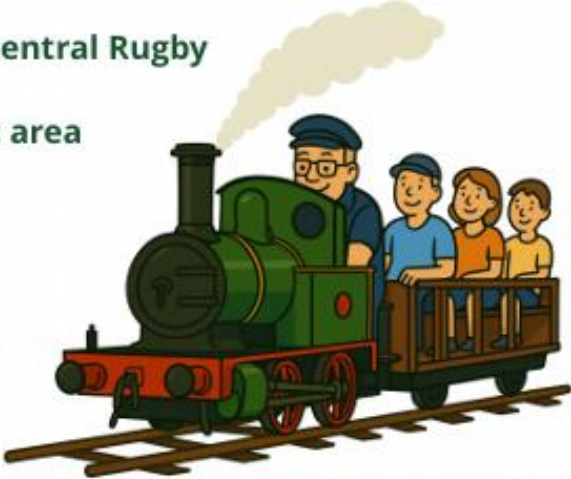
2026 SUMMER SEASON

PUBLIC RIDE DAYS

- Just 5 minutes from central Rugby
- Free parking
- Friendly cafe & picnic area
- Beautiful scenery
- All ages welcome!

Save the dates!

19th July
16th August
30th August
20th September
11th October
31st October



Book your tickets today



Great for all the family and friends!



Find out more at...
www.rainsbrookvalleyrailway.co.uk

Special event 27th September

We are again proud to be holding a special event on **Sunday 27th September** (from 1pm until 3pm) for those who would like to enjoy RMES in a quieter environment.

The event is aimed specifically at those visitors who may find it difficult to cope with both the crowds and the queuing. This private, accessible and welcoming family event, will allow those visitors to enjoy rides without undue pressure.

The event is free to the invited guests and being co-ordinated by Gill Nelson (Secretary to R&R Lions). If you know of anyone who would like to attend, please get them to email Gill at special.event.rmes@gmail.com

The event has Sandra Burchell as organiser and will only involve the ground level track, but we need the support of members to be able to run it. If you can help as a loco owner/driver or guard we would be pleased to hear from you. We will also need support for crossings, signals and station.

If you can help please email Howard as soon as possible at rmes.sec@hotmail.co.uk.



2026 Special Event ⁽⁵⁾

Sponsored by Rugby Rokeby Lions Club
Sunday 27th September 1.00pm - 3.00pm

During public running weekends, we at Rainsbrook, recognise that it can be difficult for some of our visitors to cope with both the crowds and the queuing, spoiling their enjoyment of the occasion .

We have therefore decided to hold another private, accessible and welcoming family event, so that rides can be enjoyed without undue pressure.

For the 2 hours of the event our guests can enjoy unlimited rides on trains absolutely free of charge.

This event is by application only !

To apply contact Gill Nelson who will log your application and at a later date confirm if you are successful.
Gill can be contacted by e mail :
special.event.rmes@gmail.com

Please note that we have a carriage capable of transporting a wheel chair and will also have a team of people in attendance to assist in helping guests on and off the trains if required.

Refreshments will be on sale but feel free to bring your own picnic as we have tables available in a large grassy area.
To learn more about our society visit our website
rugbymes.co.uk

Dates for your diary

Sunday 6nd September - Members running.

Saturday 12th September - 2pm-4pm Children's party. Contact Sandra if you can help.

Sunday 13th September – 2 ½" Association Rally

Sunday 20nd September -1pm -4pm – Public Ride Day.

Contact rmes.sec@hotmail.co.uk to help.

Sunday 27th September 1:00-3:00pm – Special event contact rmes.sec@hotmail.co.uk to help.

That's all for August

Thanks so much for the contributions this month, if you have any interesting articles for next month's newsletter please send them across by 20.09.26 to newsletter@rugbymes.co.uk.

Edited by Dawn Culling and Danny Culling
(30.08.2026)

Note: All photos by the author unless otherwise credited.