Dear Member,

Welcome to our October Newsletter

What a busy October at RMES! We have been blessed with some beautiful weather and have thoroughly made the most of it on site. We have seen the final few public events of the year, whilst also showcasing our work at the Midlands Model Engineering Exhibition (MMEE) at the Warwickshire Event Centre.

This month's newsletter brings together updates from around the site **(p3–4)**, engineering **(p5 – 7)**, the lovely final Public Ride afternoon of 2026 **(p8)**, a special spooktacular Halloween event **(p9 & 11)** and the RMES entry at the Midland Model Engineering Exhibition **(p12 - 14).**

Regular features can also be found: Scribblings from Peter Hill **(P15 – p28)** and a lookback at the archive **(p29)**

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

Whistle Stop — This month our quick-fire Q&A is with one of our youngest members - Millie Culling **(p30 - 32).**

Notices – Please take the time to read through our important notices for this month too **(p33).**



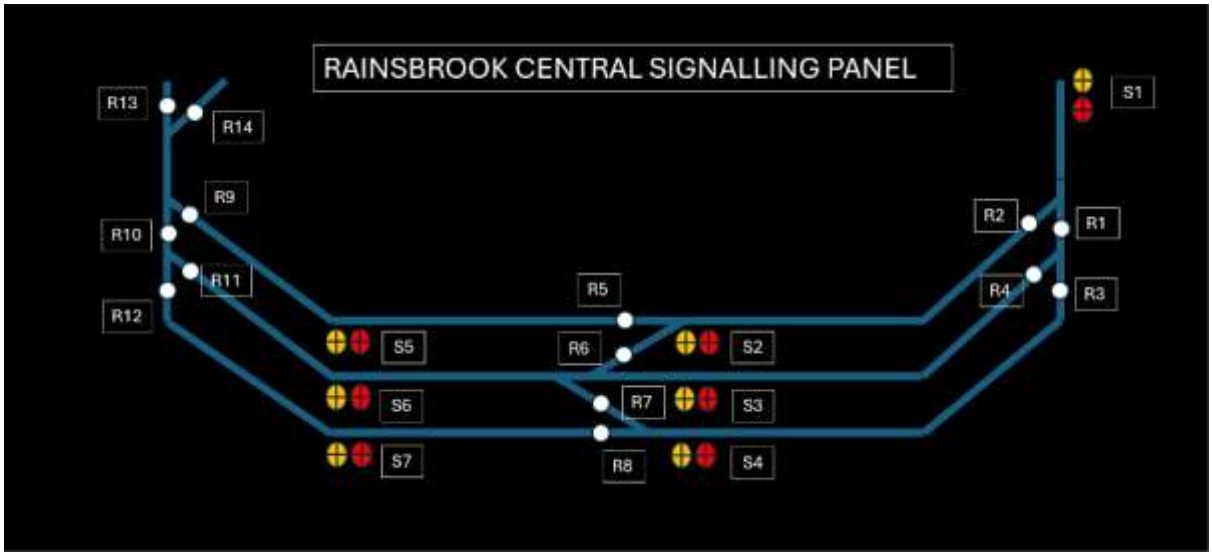
All set up to give passengers a spooky time at our dusk Halloween event.

Photo Credit: Millie Culling

Chairman's Line

Photo credits in this section: Rolf Thomas

A couple of incidents this year have really highlighted an already identified need to improve the control of trains into, within and out of Rainsbrook Central during our public ride events. The committee is considering installing a signal box adjacent to platform 3 within which will be housed the necessary controls to operate not only existing the motorised points but also additional signalling.



Whilst local train control will remain in place for non-public ride events, the intention is for the new signal and points control to be designed to ensure that conflicting train movements cannot happen through the adoption of appropriate interlocks.

To move forwards from our current control systems to what is envisaged here is complex and will need careful consideration and many man hours, but I am confident we have the necessary expertise within the membership to achieve this.

The project will run ahead of our longer-term plans for the expansion of the facilities at Rainsbrook Central which have been the subject of a number of meetings with Rugby Borough Council so far this year.

More to follow on this exciting new project which will no doubt interest aspiring signallers within the membership.

Watch this space!

Rolf

Track update

The track gang have been really busy this October, finalising the Tandem LH point to serve CS3 and then working on the new carriage shed.

Photo credits in this section: Howard Brewer





We are delighted that the tandem point is now complete with the "bridging" rails to CS3 in place.

A huge thank you to Don Currie and chairman Rolf for all their work on this project!





Don pushing in the Wheelchair carriage as the first resident of the new carriage shed.



The carriage shed now filled with 12 of the 300 series carriages.

Engineering Update

Photo Credits on this page: Kathryn Derby and John Wildblood

The engineering team have had a very busy October, both on and off site. As well as ongoing maintenance, and doing an amazing job continuing to build high track carriages, the team have been cleaning up and preparing locos for winter. The team have also been preparing for showcasing the work of RMES at the Midlands Model Engineering Exhibition (see separate article on p12).



Logan did a fantastic job giving The Shay a through clean down ready to hibernate over winter.



Martin renovated the vacuum cleaner with amazing effect. Kathryn said "I was overjoyed at having a vacuum that vacuums with enthusiasm!"



Logan preparing couplings before painting them.





Jason and George working on a bogey for a new high rail carriage.

There are to be 10 new carriages in total, 2 are complete, 2 are nearly there and there are another 6 still to be built…

Preparations for the Midlands Model Engineering Exhibition

The coal crusher was a feature on the exhibition stand, so the team cleaned it down ready to go.











The table for the coal crusher to sit.

Phil has made / welded the metal table structure together. Jason cleaned it up and Kathryn & Skye gave it a coat of paint – it's been a real team effort!



The coal crusher on display on the RMES stand at the MMEE

Public Running

We were blessed with a beautiful afternoon for the final Sunday afternoon public ride of 2026. The gorgeous weather helped to ensure we had a great turnout, with 355 members of the public joining us for a fun afternoon out. It was lovely to see lots of families and friends having fun and enjoying train rides on both the low and high track.

Photo credits in this section: Dawn and Ben Culling













Halloween Ride event

We were delighted to round off our 2026 public running season with a 'spooktacular' Halloween event.

More than 200 excited visitors joined us at dusk for an evening of Halloween fun and railway magic. Our volunteer team transformed the site into a wonderfully spooky attraction, creating a fantastic atmosphere for all to enjoy. The track was lined with eerie lighting, glowing pumpkins and some brilliant special effects, helping to bring the event to life.

Events like these are only possible thanks to the hard work and dedication of our volunteers. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Mike, Sue, Adam and Ben, and Tony Shoobridge for the fantastic theatrics around the site, to Steve and Ruby Gill and John for decorations at the café, for George & Shirley for their "ghost-train" loco and to Ellen for the Peter Rabbit Area. A big thank you to all of our on-the-day volunteers including the Rugby Rokeby Lions who helped make the evening such a memorable experience for our visitors.

Thank you to everyone who joined us, and we look forward to welcoming you back for more events in 2027!












BEWARE
GHOSTS


RAY. I. RIDE























RMES at the Midlands Model Engineering Exhibition

Photo credits in this section: Rolf Thomas and Jason Dakin

RMES was delighted to attend the Midlands Model Engineering Exhibition as part of our annual programme of events, showcasing our work from Thursday 15th to Sunday 18th October.

The exhibition is one of the UK's premier model engineering events, bringing together 34 clubs and societies from across the country this year. Visitors also had the opportunity to browse a wide range of trade stands offering specialist tools, materials and supplies for model engineering projects.



Our stand attracted plenty of interest throughout the four-day event. Designed to be viewed from all sides, it featured: *0-6-0 NCB saddle tank loco, CliShay, 2 ½" Tender and Open Wagon, SBB Be4/6, Lilla, LBSC Virginia, Mixer, the Coal Crusher and Wagon , Penrhyndeudraeth, and the Mississippi Tow Boat*. These displays provided an excellent opportunity to highlight the craftsmanship and engineering skills of our members.

The show usually attracts over 12,000 visitors over the four days, and our team enjoyed many interesting conversations with fellow enthusiasts and members of the public keen to learn more about RMES and our activities.

Rolf commented: *"Visitors were most interested in our three "floor display" exhibits, Penrhyndeudraeth – for being such a large model on 5" gauge. Mixer and the coal crusher for being something different. Mixer in particular attracted the attentions of many who had previously worked on Lister or Petter diesel engines in their younger days. One chap actually asked my which factory railway it had originally worked on and how long ago it had been restored! It seems I achieved my design aims…"*



A huge thank you goes to everyone who contributed their time, effort and enthusiasm to make the exhibition such a success and to Rolf for being a great team leader and pulling the whole event together.

- *To Phil Hackock, Martin Rose, Neil Brown, Tony Milne, Peter Hill, Glyn & George Winsall and Rolf for the exhibits.*

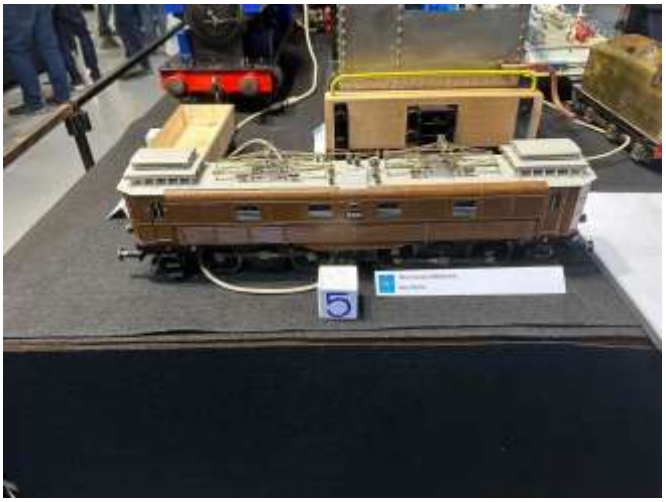
- *To Howard, Aubyn, Jason Tony and Rolf for stewarding at the event each day.*

- *To Don for helping with set up and a special mention to Phil Hancock for fabricating the coal crusher table and transporting the whole, very heavy contraption to the show and back. And to Logan and Kathryn Derby for the paint job!*

Events like these are only possible because of the dedication of our volunteers, and we are extremely grateful for all of their support.













Phil Hancock And Ian Clipston displaying their traction engines





A couple of the locos from on display from other societies at the show

Scribblings for September 2026

By Peter Hill (including all photo credits)

This month, Peter is very kindly giving us an insight into two of the exhibits that were on display at the RMES stand at the Midlands Model Engineering Exhibition; the Hunslet Penrehyndeudraeth and the Tow Boat – American Beauty. Thank you Peter 😊

Hunslet 5” NG 2-8-4T Penrhyndeudraeth

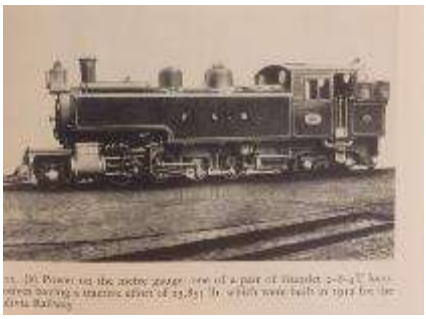


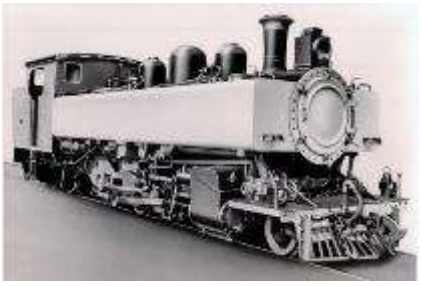
This loco started life after I saw a Dholpur being driven round Mid Wales Modellers track in. Newtown Powys.

I had finished an LBSC Marina and was looking to build something bigger than the Simplex I had ½ finished. I got a set of drawings and started on the frames. Rather than drilling loads of holes and joining them up with a hammer and cold chisel I got the local agricultural fabricators to plasma cut them from sheet black steel. To enable this I had to draw an outline on a roll of lining wallpaper, in felt tip pen and 1/16” bigger than I wanted. This was so the “magic eye” could follow it. No CNC those days. While they were at it, I also added the frame spacers, buffer beams, couplings rods cranks and anything else I could think of to maximise the work done for the cost. I also got a 7.25” Hunslet Alice 0-4-0 frames and parts at the same time, based on an upscaled Don Young design in LLAS. Eventually these would become my son Chris’s “Margwen” he finished 2018.

The final design evolved between Welsh Highland Railway 2-6-2 "Russell", a 2-8-4 1912 design and the 2-8-4 1951 Dholpur.







The frames and boiler were progressed in the 1990's but house building and classic cars took precedence at that time. Work was resumed after our relocation move and completion of our present house and workshop. Cylinders previously bored on my big Colchester Master were finished on my replacement Harrison lathe and universal mill.





Pic from LLAS shows part of the display at a 1993(?) Bala Lake Railway modellers weekend at Llanwchlyn station, the 5" NG 2-8-4T rolling chassis and almost finished boiler , the 7.25"NG 0-4-0T Alice Chassis, 5" Simplex boiler on its rolling chassis in the background, also on the table the part-built Alchin now sold on.

After our house was completed and workshop set up I renewed effort to complete this 200kg model loco. Efforts soon got the frames air running. I put it on rollers and air powered it for 24 hours. A few probs, a hot bearing and the Walchaerts quadrant

trunnions fell off. A strip down and some micro tig welding sorted the trunnions and turned up a new bearing, concentric this time.

The motion bracket we resolved into a CAD drawing and got parts laser cut. Then snapped them together and TIG welded up. Rods were stainless.

The piston rings are CUPLET design and I found a guy specialising in these. Time to recognise beyond my skill grade.

The motion work was linished up after the journal housings were machined in the vertical mill. At least think with the DRO we got the bearing centres spot on. The fluting was with a disc cutter on an arbour in the mill.











Then on to the boiler. After a good pickle all the bushes were fitted, temp. Bungs and a 200lb hydraulic test. Passed no leaks! Then stainless super heaters, boiler fittings, road and welded smokebox. Iron chimney with a bronze cap.

Multilayer insulation and hard brass wrapper. I painted the wrapper before fitting. Brass boiler bands.

The tanks and cab work Chris drew in CAD and we got it laser cut in 16swg brass.

Chris got the rivet holes all to align making the all riveted assembly easier.

It was soft soldered to seal up.









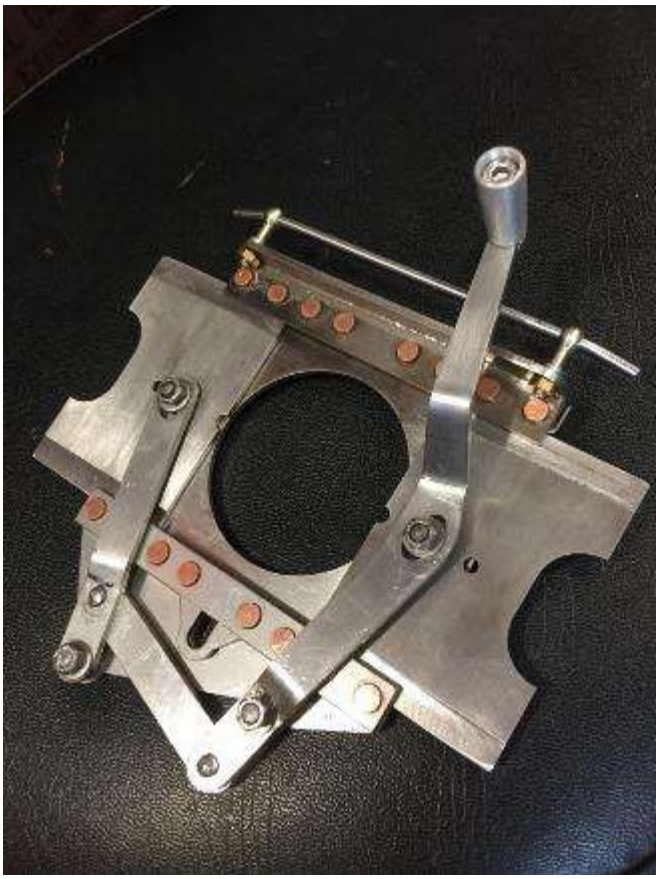


























At Rainsbrook having a steam test. The loco is just about finished, just needs a headlamp, and complete the fitting of a donkey pump.

Mississippi Tow Boat “American Beauty”

Pic of actual boat live on youtube



During Covid lockdown of winter 2019, I explored YouTube on a new smart TV. I found a channel called “StreamTime Live” and a webcam “Mississippi River Lock 19 Keokuk Iowa USA.

I watched river towboats handling their barge loads through the lock and became fascinated with a genre of craft I was largely unaware of. I explored other sites on these towboats including some actual, over the captains shoulder, journeys.

At this point I decided to build an RC model to add to my boat model collection.



I found an American kit manufacturer (Dumas) producing a plywood and obeche kit with a moulded ABS hull at 7/32” to 1ft , approx 1/48th scale.I found an opened unstarted one on eBay at a good price, including the cast white metal fittings kit. However there was no hardware kit and this proved quite expensive so I set to making the prop tubes and rudders in brass and stainless steel. I also had a friend who had a 3D printer who turned sketches of other parts like window frames doors rubbish bins and a bistro set into realities.

I also set to and installed wiring to run LED working deck, spot and cabin lights and mini geared motors to run the radar scanners. I arranged that they could all be operated by the RC with small pcb digital switches.









The six prototypical rudders are arranged in sets of 3 and using two servos can “flank” and enable the boat to turn almost in its own length. While making the six rudders and linkages I investigated this arrangement further on the USA patents website where the “Method of steering for towboats” was published in the 1920’s

The kit assembly was straightforward. Epoxy was used to fix the deck substructure to the hull, roughing it first, also for prop and rudder tubes, fix motor mounts and battery box.

Fast wood glue for the superstructure. Some had to be sanded and primer Ed before final parts were glued because of access under protruding decks etc.

The whole was sprayed with primer hand sanded down to eliminate raised wood grain,

Final coats by aerosol cans.

Then the previously painted fittings were epoxied in place, window and door frames bollards and soldered brass railings. The railings were soft soldered all over to give the appearance of galvanising. Also, the brass rope and tackle baskets on the rear upper deck.

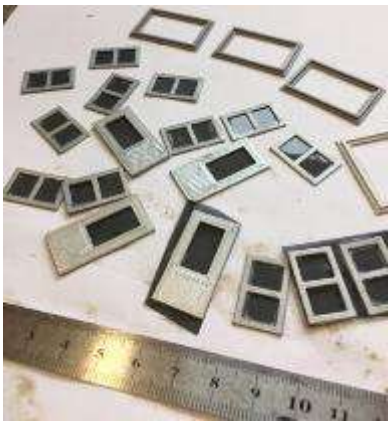
Supplementary fittings were 3D printed, the RIB, the captains bistro set, airco units, ladders, wheelie bins.

The RC is a Turnigy 6 channel TX and RX, with two brushed propulsion motors and PWM controllers. I made two plug in digital electronic switch units for the lights and radar scanner motors.



















From the Archives: A Lookback to Summer 2016

Howard has found us a few more gems from 2016.



A busy gang painting the outside of the workshop container, you will notice there is no roof on the "compound" at this time.



A new path had been laid between CS2 and the workshop, all changed now!

A few of our entry at MMEE in 2016



A model viaduct had been built by the late Brian Walton ready for MMEE.





Another view, showing the viaduct in place carrying 5" models.

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

This month the tough questions are posed to one of our younger members, Millie Culling (aged 14)

Tell us about your professional background.



When I was little, I used to love playing with my Thomas the Tank Engine play set. I loved visiting steam trains, but they were very noisy for me at the time! After my brother, Daniel was born, the love for trains was transferred to him too! As we grew older, my love for trains remained, but Daniel's grew into a massive part of his personality that he is now very passionate about.

This love for trains has been in our family for years - our grandparents loved to see the trains. Our nan used to live next to a railway line when she was a girl and she has told us many stories of hours spent watching the steam trains, including the sight of the circus carriages transporting the elephants! Pops has been an engineer all his life and it's lovely to see him sharing some of his knowledge with Danny too.



How did you first get into model railway engineering?

When I was really little I loved watching and reading about Ivor the Engine. My Thomas the Tank Engine playset used to run all the way around our living room, my favorite engines were Emily and Flora.

While I like the views from the carriages and the beautiful paintwork on some of the trains and carriages, Danny prefers the engineering and the hands-on side of the trains. I have been coming to Rainsbrook since I was very little, Danny and I even have our names on a sleeper from when we were 3 & 5 years old. One thing I remember about the old Rainsbrook track is the bleeping flashing light that used to exist near the old ticket office and it would siren when a train was coming. It is such a good memory to have.

When did you join RMES?

After being visitors for years, Danny couldn't wait to join on his tenth birthday, so I and the rest of the family followed shortly after.

What do you enjoy most about being part of the society



The community and new people that I meet every time I come. Rainsbrook has such a lovely family feel and I enjoy making myself useful with something that I wouldn't normally get the chance to do. I have driven both the 5" and 7 1/2" track thanks to George and Shirley!

What RMES activities are you known for?

I help out with the merchandise and sometimes in the café, and am often seen around the site taking pictures that can be used for our social media, I have a great wave too!

What has been your favourite locomotive experience?



The north Norfolk railway used to run a Y14, built in 1912 at Stratford Works. I love this train because although it is smaller than some trains, when I was younger it was a very approachable engine, not too noisy and rather pretty. One holiday I was lucky enough to visit the footplate. Unfortunately, the Y14's boiler needed repair works, and it has not been out for a couple of years, but we keep looking for it and every time we go. Hopefully, this engine will be fully restored soon and will be up and running as it once was.

What is your preferred gauge?

I like all gauges, Danny has a 00 gauge and a N gauge track at home, both of which I have enjoyed helping create the artwork and scenery for. I also enjoy riding both the high and low track at Rainsbrook, as each one is lovely in its own way. However, I would have to say that I enjoy the 5 inch better, as they are easier to control and sometimes, I get to drive which I LOVE! We have a 5 inch Class 15 diesel replica called Scruffy and he is lots of fun.

Do you have any hobbies or clubs outside RMES?

I really enjoy both reading and art, as both are very creative. At school, I love drama and I was Lady Macbeth in a production recently. I enjoy the theatre; we went to watch a production based on my favourite Japanese film called "My Neighbour Totoro" and we

also recently saw Starlight Express. When I was younger, we went to Kilworth house and saw both Cats and Hairspray, we are really lucky to have such a beautiful outdoor theatre close by.

Tell us about last Heritage Railway that you visited

We regularly visit both the north Norfolk and West Somerset Railways. We are lucky enough that our grandparents live in Somerset and so we can visit the WSR every summer. I love this railway as some of it runs right next to the sea, where all sorts of interesting things happen. I love visiting Watchet market on a Wednesday, and my favourite bit is visiting a lovely café called The Driftwood next to Blue Anchor Station, which serves amazing lunches, I would definitely recommend it!

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

I am Girl Guiding Ranger, and next summer we are going to Belgium on a week-long trip. We are staying in Ypres and are taking part in the Last Post at the Menin Gate, plus we are hopefully visiting a chocolate factory too!



Notices and Updates

Polite reminder

Please can we ask everyone bringing dogs to the site to be mindful of other visitors.

We all enjoy our time at Rainsbrook, and nobody wants to go home with messy shoes!

Dogs are very welcome on site, provided they are kept on a lead at all times and any mess is cleaned up and disposed of responsibly.

Thank you for your consideration and cooperation.

Date for your diary

Saturday 5th December – Christmas Lunch, details to follow.

That's all for October

Thanks so much for the contributions this month, please can I ask for contributions for Novembers newsletter by 15.11.26 to newsletter@rugbymes.co.uk.

Edited by Dawn Culling and Danny Culling
(31.10.2026)

Note: All photos by the author unless otherwise credited.