

# The Oily Rag!



Chris Kelly driving his Britannia locomotive during the Open Day in September.  
Photograph by Mel Arlett.

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# Contents

|         |                             |                     |
|---------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Page 2  | Chairman's Report           | David Hartland      |
| Page 3  | Subscriptions Renewal       | Barry Baxter        |
| Page 4  | Visit of the Brean Steamers | Phil Mortimer       |
| Page 6  | Louvre Doors                | Master Bodger (Rtd) |
| Page 11 | A Handy Spraying Aid        | Eddie Handysides    |
| Page 12 | Items for Sale              |                     |
| Page 13 | Pictures from the Open Day  |                     |
| Page 16 | Dates for Your Diary        |                     |
| IBC     | List of Boiler Testers      |                     |

# Chairman's Report

by David Hartland

I write this after a really good club meeting. It was an excellent speaker – Peter Collins talking about his life flying helicopters all around the world and with lots of humour and thoughtful stories. But it was also the fact that the meeting was held at West Buckland – on our own site, in our own building, with the walls painted, the ceiling finished, the lights working and (this is the big one) **the heating working!** We can come and go as we please and pack up when we like; the projector and bits do not have to be transported around; we do not have to stack the chairs at the end of the meeting or be quiet when leaving the site. It is all **ours!** We have come a very long way since the planning application was made in 2018 and it is interesting to look back at those plans and drawings and see that we have very much followed the original ideas and built what we intended all along. Many members have contributed to this project, in many different ways and the result is plain for all to see.

The second big Open Day at West Buckland went well, with several hundred rides given and lots of smiling faces around the site. There are still some issues to be sorted out in the running of the site and some more development – for instance we do need some signalling next year to protect the level crossing rather than relying on hand signals. We are now looking at the 2026 programme of events and open days for West Buckland and Vivary, the latter still dependent on the decision by Somerset Council on the possible Sunday car parking charges.

Working parties continue to be well supported but there is always room for more. We are planning to have a 'Volunteers Day' early next year to encourage more help from the local area so if you know of anyone who might be interested to come along then let them know. As I hope everyone is aware, there are jobs on site for all levels of skill, all levels of physical ability and all levels of enthusiasm.

The club is at a high point. The challenge now is to keep that success rolling, and with that in mind we are progressing plans to start the Yonder Field site development next year. This will involve more excavations, the tunnel construction, the pond, and the new track extensions. For those who have joined since the early days at West Buckland, this Phase 2 work will be their chance to experience the excitement of building railways from scratch in open country. An exciting prospect!

Finally, some sad news. Allan Dew died recently. He was a regular attender at West Buckland from the early days, driving to the site from his home in Barnstaple, and was encouragement and guidance in the use of mechanical plant on site. He kept himself going, and kept us all going in his way. He will be missed and we offer our condolences to Shirley and the rest of his family.

# Subscriptions Renewal 2026

A note from Barry Baxter

A reminder to all current members that subscriptions for 2026 are due to be paid before 31st December 2025. Again the rates have not increased and are as follows:

Full member £50

Spouse/Partner £5

Junior member (includes those under 18 or in full time education) £5

You can pay in the following ways:

**By cheque:** payable to Taunton Model Engineers, post to Barry Baxter (address inside front cover) or handed over at any meeting.

**By Credit or Debit Card:** at any meeting.

**By Bank Transfer:** to Taunton Model Engineers, Santander Bank, sort code 09-01-54 account number 41903282 and include your surname as a reference on the payment.

The payment of subscriptions promptly helps with the club's cash flow and saves on the time and expenses of chasing up renewals. The rules are that if you have not renewed by 31st January 2026 your membership will lapse and you will need to re-apply for membership.

If you pay income tax, the club is able to reclaim 25% of your subscription as gift aid. If this is applicable to you, please fill in the gift aid section on the membership form available from Barry Baxter. This is a very significant extra income for the club.

If you have any updates for your address, email address, and telephone number including mobile number. Please let Barry Baxter know to keep our files updated.

# Visit of the Brean Steamers

Phil Mortimer

Thursday 12th September started off a bright and sunny day but as the day continued rain showers appeared as once again TME welcomed fellow model engineers, better known as The Brean Steamers, to our West Buckland site, who make their annual pilgrimage to the West Country.

This year the visiting locomotives were a 3½in Juliet named *Jack*, aka, The Handbag Loco, accompanied by a 5in GWR 28xx from Maidstone MES, a 5in B1 from Pembroke Model Engineering Society, another two locos from the Maidstone MES a 5in Speedy and an electric shunter, a 5in Britannia from Northolt Model Railway Club, a 5in Sweet Pea from the New Forest Club, a 91 year old 3½” 4-6-2 Gresley named *Spitfire*, the owner had the history of it and a photo of Nigel Gresley driving it and last but not least a 5in Jinty from a TME member who joins the Brean Steamers on their tour of the local clubs.

Some of the visitors were joined by their wives and it was good to see Andrew Harvey back with them.

Teas, coffees and cakes were supplied by TME's catering department. Thank you.

They were all impressed on what has been achieved since they came last year and one visitor was heard to remark that this was his favourite track.

It was a very enjoyable day and even the rain showers did not put the visitors off from running. Both the raised level and ground level tracks were put to good use.

My thanks go to all the club members who turned out to help on what was a very enjoyable day.





# Louvre doors? – Lubbly Jubbly

By Master Bodger (Rtd)

If there were a list of the most popular subjects written about in model engineering publications, then number one must be tips on how to carry out wheel quartering for steam locomotives. Number two would be how to form louvre doors for battery locos, so here is my contribution to get this topic closer to number one.

Steam locos may be on everyone's wish list but you can't beat the convenience of a battery loco, especially when you have grandchildren and they expect everything done instantly. But which example to build was my conundrum. I looked at various British outlines, but nothing excited me. Then I remembered in a previous life (before wife) travelling around Switzerland by rail. Any significant station would have a shunter to carry out all those logistical jobs of rearranging stock and sending trains on their way like only the Swiss can do. These diesel hydraulic shunters had the designation Tm 2/2. Tm means shunter and 2/2 means two axles, both powered.

A quick search of the internet found an outline drawing with overall dimensions and wheelbase. Now I'm no engineer, so I knew I would have to sub-contract the running gear to someone else. Back to the internet to see if there was anything similar made by 7¼ in suppliers. Bingo, Ride on Railways in Essex did a Welsh slate loco with a wheelbase similar to my requirements. Enquiries were made about possible changes to the wheelbase and frames to make it more like my need, and they were more than accommodating, so an order was placed.

Eight weeks later a pallet arrived and the beast from East was unpacked; now my work could start. Although I had done some sketches for the bodywork, I wasn't sure how the two batteries would fit in the space I had available. I wanted to get one battery over each axle, so a hardboard dummy cab and bonnet were formed up. I must admit it took me three attempts of cutting and screwing pieces together to get a shape I was pleased with. It's definitely not a scale replica but it is a fair representation of the real thing when compared to photos.

Now what to make the bodywork from. I'm not a lover of plywood as a finish, because no matter how much filling and sanding you do, it still looks like a wooden box. I decided to get some 1mm sheet steel and fix it with construction sealant to a 9mm plywood body to give it some strength. This way I get the best of both worlds - I am able to form some nice bodywork corners and have a smooth surface for painting. 1mm steel is easy to bend and fortunately my 750mm long bender was just able to do the biggest piece.

I used car body filler to cover up all my mistakes and a lot of repetitive sanding and filing to get the right finish

After the main bodywork, there is all the detailing, all of which was decorative. One was the compressor reservoir which was a piece of copper tube I had at about the right size, with two bulbous ends turned up in brass and soldered in. Then there were the fuel tanks. More 1mm steel folded up, with any joints glued together with JB Weld. This was a product I had not heard about until a few years ago when I saw a guy refurbishing a 6 in bench vice on You Tube which had a big chunk missing out of the body. It's a cross between araldite and a resin filler. It sticks like the proverbial and then you can sand down any excess. Sanding boxes used the same principles with a dummy pipe onto the rail head.

Now I needed a radiator grille, so back to the internet for some suitable mesh. Can't remember the supplier now, but they provided free samples at 300mm square, which was ideal because I only needed 275mm square, not the 2400 x 1200mm sheet they were hoping I would buy!!!

The locos in Switzerland have small snowploughs, just to remove small snowfalls, anything bigger is the job for the snowblowers. But what was the best way to make these 3D angular items? I had some 75mm galvanised rainwater pipe and some 50mm angle and 25mm steel box. All the ingredients I needed. I decided that if I used the angle and inclined it down and splayed to the outside edges this would give the rough profile. Setting up the compound angles on the bandsaw was a challenge, but after a couple of attempts I was happy with the result. Now I had the basic shape, the next head scratcher was how to support it. This is where the 25mm box came in, and with more angle cuts I was able to make some legs that would hang the whole assembly from the frames. This needed welding, and some temporary braces were bolted on so that the welding could be carried out with no chance of movement. Once all that was done, I needed to form the internal curvature of the snow plough, so back to the rainwater pipe I first mentioned. A 300mm length was cut and then quartered lengthways. With more compound cutting I found I could sit them within the steel angle supports. I decided the best way to hold them in place was body filler. A generous amount mixed, the angles filled and the curved bits of rainwater pipe bedded in. The great advantage is that it can be filed and sanded when set to provide a nice finish.

The cab windows were the next project. The originals seem to have aluminium sliding windows, presumably so that the driver can yell at the shunter in one of the four languages that are spoken in Switzerland. (Although I think it's more likely that they use the radios to communicate.) Back to Ebay, to look for some small aluminium section. As usual it rarely disappoints and there was

some channel section which would do. I did reduce it a little more and made up some frames with 3mm Perspex siliconed in place. With some mirror film applied so that all the internal gubbins were not visible, the job was done.

The loco has handrails front and back into which are mounted red and white warning lights. When I had first drawn this detail out, I hadn't considered how I was going to do the lights – bad mistake. Now the search was on to find something to fit in the space available. The originals have rectangular lights, but this wasn't going to be possible. However, I did find some trailer marker lights online that just and only just, fitted the space.

And now for those louvre doors I mentioned at the beginning.

The prototype is different to many locos in that the louvre blades project inwards rather than outwards. This not a problem but what was needed was a way of forming neat symmetrical blades. I purchased a few years ago a small arbor press from a club auction. Don't know why, I just got caught up in the frenzy of bidding. Anyway, it was now to come in useful but first we needed a drawing. Two doors are required with twelve louvre blades, six in both top and bottom halves. A fellow TME member recommended a laser cutting company to do the initial cuts and the drawing was sent to them. Because I wanted to do the bends as easily as possible, I decided that 24 swg brass would be easier than the steel sheet I had used for everything else. The laser would do a 0.2mm wide cut on three edges and then I could bend along the other long edge, I was amazed how cheap this was, less than twenty pounds for two delivered. When they arrived, I had to decide how to press out the blades, so a jig was contrived that could be mounted in the arbor press. Using half inch square steel with bolts and spacers a block could be constructed that would secure the plate firmly while a former pressed out the blade. By making the blades and the gaps between 5mm, when the first blade is punched, it can be located in the recess of the lower bit of jig for the next to be pressed and so on. As is always the case it takes far longer to make the tool than do the job itself. The edges of the door were then folded around 5mm, and although this stiffened the door, it was decided to glue in (JB weld again) a 25 x 3mm strip of brass, which also neatly sealed off the ends of the louvres internally.

Now for the painting. But what was the correct colour? Being a member of the Swiss Railway Society gave me access to their forum. So the question was posed and within an hour I had been given the RAL number, confirmed later by two other people. It's amazing what you can find out if you know where to ask. The colour was supplied as an aerosol and several applications later the desired finish was achieved.

I decided to give the loco the number '121', because the current run of locos only go up to '120'. There have been improvements and alterations to each

batch of locos that have been made over the years. So if they continue with '121' onwards I hope they will use my model as the basis of a design. The other item that was needed was some logos and lettering. The loco would have been used on the Rhatische Bahn, which is a private railway in the south east of Switzerland. I noticed on their website that they have logos and trademarks for railway modellers. The proviso is that it is only to be for private use and have no commercial benefit. So six pages later a contract is signed and returned and access is gained to the necessary PDF files at no cost. I found the name and logo I needed and, with a bit of adaptation for scale, forwarded the PDF file to a local sign maker. For a nominal cost the numbers and logos were supplied and the relatively easy task of applying the sticky back decals was done.

Just a couple more jobs to complete the project: one is the whistle. Swiss locos have a high pitch single tone which echoes around the mountains. I need to source a suitable one to sound around the Blackdowns. The other item is to install vacuum brake for use with the train. Always another project to work on!



The prototype locomotive in service on Swiss Railways. Photo courtesy SwissRail.



The brass sheet with laser cut slots being placed into the jig. Photo by Maurice Hartnell.



The first two louvers punched out. Photo by Maurice Hartnell.



The completed model locomotive awaiting its next turn of duty. Photo by Maurice Hartnell.

# A Handy Spraying Aid

by Eddie Handysides

We often have to spray paint small objects in the course of our model work and invariably we end up stringing a clothes line across the workshop and making lots of little hooks to hang up the parts .... Well, here is a little unit made up to counter this problem – a folding line for supporting spraying items which folds up easily when not in use. The photographs show the unit folded and set up ready for use!



# Items for Sale

The club has a number of items left for sale after the auction. Come along to the clubhouse to see the full range Included are:

Cutter grinding machine

Parallel motion drawing board (A3 size)

Bench top wooden bandsaw (cuts wood, not made of wood)

Tilting machine vice

Lumps of cast iron

Set of collets

Scribing block (height gauge) choice of 5.

Sharpening stones.

Electric plane, Wolf manufacture (quality stuff).

All can be sold for any reasonable offer!



# From the Open Day on 21st September 2025



David Hartland, Adam Farrance and Ian Marks at the signal box.  
Photograph by Mel Arlett.



Maureen Chester with her huge display of food for the Open Day.  
Photograph by Mel Arlett.



Andrew Prentice with his 1400 class locomotive on the ground level track. Photograph by Mel Arlett.



The steaming bay with three 7 1/4 locomotives being prepared. Photograph by Mel Arlett.



Relaxing after the Open Day – Ian Marks, Ben Curtis, Harry Howe, Bob Arlett, Phil Mortimer, Dave Wood, David Hartland, Bob Abel and Nigel Gettings. Photograph by Mel Arlett.



Tim Griffiths driving the Hymek and Jon Freeman with his petrol electric locomotive.



Ben Curtis driving the Hymek with Barry Baxter giving the 'All Clear' signal. Photograph by David Hartland.



Gordon Roberts with his Darjeeling – Himalayan locomotive with a full load of passengers. Photograph by David Hartland.



Peter Clark with his Butch passing across the Raised Track traverser. Photograph by David Hartland.

|                                                                                                        |                                                                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                     |  |
| Enamel pin fix bidge<br>£5                                                                             | Patch sew on badge<br>£7                                                            |
| <h3>Club Badges</h3> <p>Available from Tim Griffiths<br/>also available garment embroidery service</p> |                                                                                     |

# Dates for your Diary

TME calendar 2025

|               |                                                                         |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Nov 4 (Tues)  | Meeting Chris Wiseman “RAF Exeter 1937 -1945” at West Buckland.         |
| Nov 18 (Tues) | Meeting Mike Weedon, ‘Austrian Narrow Gauge Railways’ at West Buckland. |
| Dec 2 (Tues)  | Meeting TBA at West Buckland.                                           |
| Dec 7 (Sun)   | Santa Public Running at Vivary Park 12.00 – 15.00<br>Setup from 10.00   |
| Dec 12 (Fri)  | Christmas Lunch at Oake Manor Golf Club                                 |
| Dec 14 (Sun)  | Santa Public Running at Vivary Park 12.00 – 15.00<br>Setup from 10.00   |
| Dec 16 (Tues) | Meeting “Mince Pies and Natter” at West Buckland .                      |
| Jan 6 (Tues)  | Meeting ‘British Transport Films’ with David Hartland at West Buckland. |
| Jan 20 (Tues) | Meeting TBA at West Buckland.                                           |
| Feb 3 (Tues)  | Meeting “The Wonderful World of Glass” by Dr. Francis Burroughes        |
| Feb 17 (Tues) | Meeting “Quiz Night” with Mark Sweet. at West Buckland.                 |
| Mar 3 (Tues)  | Meeting TBA at West Buckland.                                           |
| Mar 17 (Tues) | Club AGM at West Buckland.                                              |

**NOTE** - All meetings at West Buckland start at 1930 unless stated otherwise.

# TME Boiler Testers

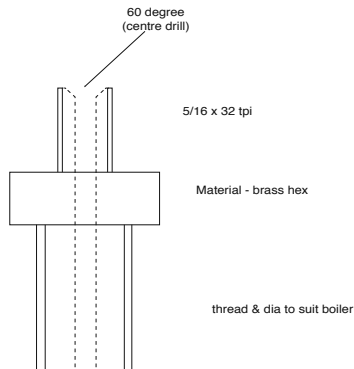
## Boiler Testers for copper boilers

Nigel Gettings 01984 623190  
Harry Howe 07809 259963  
Ian Grinter 01823 400681  
Dave Wood 01823 698928  
Tony Newberry 01823 412655  
Andrew Harvey 01935 411843

## Boiler Testers for steel boilers

Dave Wood 01823 698928  
Harry Howe 07809 259963  
Andrew Harvey 01935 411843

To facilitate boiler testing members must fit this connection  
when submitting boilers for testing



Any member requiring a boiler test must make his own arrangements for the test with one of the testers. The boiler must be fully prepared for testing before presentation. Where an hydraulic test is required, an adaptor, as above, must be available. The boiler owner must ensure that a club member is present to witness the test. The boiler tester may refuse to test a boiler which has not been properly prepared. It is NOT the role of the boiler tester to prepare your boiler for you.

## Disclaimer

The views and articles featured in this magazine do not necessarily represent the views of the Committee, Officers, or the Members.



Mary LeCoyte with the welcome stand at the open day.  
Photograph by Mel Arlett.

Hedy and Bob Heriot at the ticket office.



Maurice Hartnell is fixing the GWR style valance boards to the canopy on the clubhouse.