



## Newsletter of THE PALMERSTON NORTH MODEL ENGINEERING CLUB INC

Managers of the "MARRINER RESERVE RAILWAY"

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# THE GENERATOR

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### TRACK RUNNING

This is held on the FIRST and THIRD Sunday of each month, from 1 pm to 4 pm Summer and 1 pm to 3 pm during the Winter. All club members are welcome to attend and help out with loco coaling, watering and passenger marshalling - none of the tasks being at all difficult. We may even offer you a cuppa.

Visiting club members are always welcome at the track, at the monthly meeting, or if just visiting and wishing to make contact with members, please phone one of the above office bearers.

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If you have been affected by the Vodafone email change, please let us know your new address so we can update your email address for continued delivery of  
**"The Generator"**

**This Months Feature - Model Mee**



## Report on the August Meeting.

Our main speaker for the August meeting was **Chris Sanders**.

Chris gave a most interesting slide illustrated account of his visit to the Harz Narrow Gauge Railways (*Harzer Schmalspurbahnen* or **HSB**). This is a one meter gauge railway located in the Harz mountains in the former East Germany. The system has about 140 km of track and one branch runs to the summit of the Brocken, the highest peak in the area (1141 m).

The main motive power is a fleet of pre-WWII steam locomotives. These include four 0-4-4-0 mallet locomotives of immediate post WWI vintage, two 262 tank locomotives built during WWI and ten 2-10-2 large tank locos built during the East Germany period.

There are also a number of diesel rail buses and three diesel/catenary electric trams.

The railway operates its own workshop and the shares in the company running the railway are owned by the district administration and by the municipalities which it serves.

Chris's slide show gave us a good idea of the scope of the railway and also of some of the towns in the district.

**Cynthia Cooper** described a venture which she and her late husband operated that made rather fanciful clay constructions of railway themes which would be appropriate for decorating a garden railway. Difficult to describe. Cynthia had an extensive album of photos which I found quite delightful.

The meeting concluded with a discussion of the arrangements in place for our Model Mee exhibition in the PN Library building which took place on the weekend of 26-27 August .

**There are still 19 outstanding subs. Please pay the treasurer as soon as possible to remain a financial member.**

## September Meeting

This will be held at 7.30pm on the 28<sup>th</sup> of September in the Hearing Association Rooms, Church Street, Palmerston North.

Robert Edwards, our President will be giving a talk on his and Margaret's trip to Canada and Alaska

## COMING EVENTS

### Track running at Marriner Reserve Railway

October	1 <sup>st</sup>	1pm-4pm
October	15 <sup>th</sup>	1pm-4pm

### Havelock North Open Weekend

Labour Weekend.

### New Plymouth Open Weekend

Labour Weekend

## Club End of Year Dinner

PN Cosmopolitan Club  
22 Linton Street  
Palmerston North

### Thursday 23 November 2017

Drinks 6pm Dinner 7pm

The cost is \$25 per person. (Pay as you arrive.)

They also have a licensed bar for you to purchase innervating liquids.

Bring the family and join us for a relaxing lead into the summer.

We look forward to seeing you there.

We need to give the restaurant an idea of numbers.

Please let us know if you plan to attend and how many there will be in your party.

Murray 326-9665, [engineer@inspire.net.nz](mailto:engineer@inspire.net.nz)  
Cynthia, 354-7100, [cynthia@trains.net.nz](mailto:cynthia@trains.net.nz)

The closing date for the next issue of The Generator is Friday 13th October

## Model Mee 2017

Your committee works hard on your behalf and we do our utmost to represent the club in the best way we can. Towards that end we are happy to have input from the members at any time. Your thoughts and ideas are always welcome.

Model Mee is a lot of work to put together and we appreciate everyone who puts in both their models and their time. We constantly strive to improve our profile in the community and this exhibition is one way to do this.

The Committee is interested in receiving feedback and comments from the membership on how the Model Mee Exhibition went this year. Please let us have your thoughts.

We came back into the centre of town to a new venue. Was this a good move? Did the venue work well? Did we have a good mixture of models? Any and all thoughts and feedback will be considered with thanks.



## Letter from England

By Stan Compton

We have just returned from a coach trip to Peterborough in Lincolnshire, the base for the Nene Valley Railway. Our train engine was a Battle of Britain class locomotive for a short trip in very pleasant countryside. Then to visit a stately home called Belton House.

The ladies love to see how the wealthy lived years ago but I can't help wondering about the life the poor lead then.

Just the same on our visit to Sandringham Estate, one of the country homes for our royalty, where else would you find a scale model of a Cannon and Limber about one third scale in one of the ground floor rooms? A gift for the royal princes pre-WWI from a royal household in Europe. The cannon of about fifty mm bore had been fired we were told. The workmanship was first class, so were the model cars in the museum made for the princes to drive. The Renault was battery powered but has been modified to represent a pre-war Daimler, because all the early royal cars were of that make. I think they had sleeve-valve engines, noticeable by the trail of smoke left in early films of state occasions. Also in the museum among the royal cars was a London taxi for the Duke to drive himself around the city.

Sandringham is not a large house. We only saw the ground floor rooms. On display was a collection of sporting guns, some with early percussion-cap fittings. They must be worth a small fortune. Every state room had a high quality French clock. I was told that a team of skilled men were brought in when the collection had to be reset by one hour. Having only six time pieces of my handiwork to reset, including the external Turret Clock, I feel a responsibility to my neighbours to set it correctly. It usually keeps within a minute a week. My Regulator did keep to one second a month just once, not bad for an amateur.

I was asked for advice by a retired model engineer who had moved into a retirement home whether to build a clock or a gauge one locomotive. Having struggled with a gauge-one kitset my choice was for a simple weight driven time piece by John Wilding that had won an award by the Model Engineer Magazine. Having a descriptive book to follow brings the complex down to simple terms. The satisfaction

gained is worthwhile if you cut your own gears. John Wilding used a Unimat Lathe to build a simple clock.

The visit to a recently restored working windmill at Heckington, near Boston in Lincolnshire was the best part of my holiday. It is the only windmill in England to have eight sails.

On our visit a stiff breeze was blowing making the brick-built structure vibrate as power was generated to operate the machinery. It is a steep walk up to the working area and the miller concentrated on his job feeding the grain at the right speed onto the hollow stone.

*(ED: See the reference to the 8 Sailed windmill last month)*

Our coach party enjoyed the visit to the Wild Bird Centre. The Kookaburra's stayed quiet and just looked at us, but the long legged secretary bird was busy nest building with a bunch of sticks. Our hotel was first class, so were the staff, making our visit very pleasant and our driver looked after us for the whole trip.

## Another article about Ohakea Airbase

The Weekly News 3 April 1938

### **HANGERS FOR NEW ZEALAND'S DEFENCE BOMBERS**

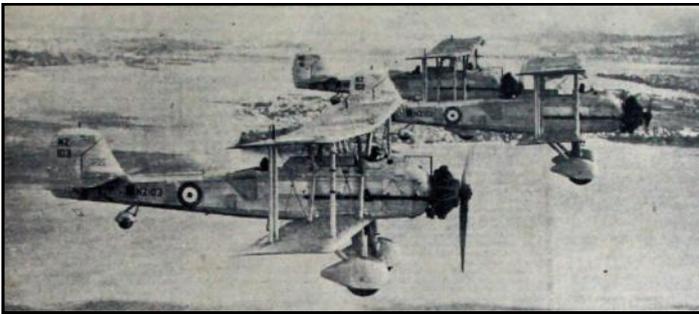
A major unit in the defence of New Zealand, an aerodrome apparently destined to be the nerve-centre of the Dominion's military aviation activities, is rapidly taking shape at Ohakea, not far from Feilding. Comparatively little of the Government's intentions with the scheme have been made public, yet it is apparent that the work is regarded as one of paramount importance, and is being pushed ahead as fast as possible.

Visitors to Ohakea are not encouraged; not that there is much to be seen as yet, but probably because it is desired that the work should proceed with a minimum of interference and delay. There is nothing on the site to indicate to passers-by that a military aerodrome is under construction. Indeed many motorists, probably hundreds each day, driving past the site at 50 miles an hour or more intent on the smooth tar-seal of the highway and oblivious to the important work going on within sight of the road. Public announcement was recently made of the letting of contracts for two hangers for Ohakea.

It is anticipated that this work will be finished in 18 months time, though whether or not the aerodrome will be ready for regular use by this time has not yet been announced. By the time the letting of the contracts for the erection of the two massive hangers had been published, however, the work was well in hand, and already there is engaged on the job a small army of men that is destined to grow as the work proceeds.

### Six Hundred Acres

Six hundred acres of fine farm land, not all the property of one owner, have been taken over by the Government for the construction of the new aerodrome. As farm land, it is extremely flat, but not flat enough for mighty bombers to land and take off at all times and in all weathers, and levelling is one of the major tasks ahead.



Levelling for the sites of the first two hangers, said to be the first of six, was one of the earliest tasks. A giant tractor, of the type recently introduced to the public works of New Zealand, complete with bull-dozer, scoops, trailers and other essential accessories is doing the work of half a hundred men. Already it has scooped away tons upon tons of earth, leaving a level site for one of the first two hangers, and is at present preparing the ground for the second.

### Modern Flying Field

Broad acres divided by gorse hedges are soon to take shape as a modern flying field, as one of the finest in the Southern Hemisphere.

Picturesque as they may be, however, gorse hedges have no place in a flying-field, and they are fast disappearing under the none too gentle persuasion of the big tractor. Visitors to Ohakea were fascinated with this enormously powerful machine. Driven by one man who sits nonchalantly at the controls, it is turned aside by no obstacle. It goes straight ahead leaving a smoothly-planed surface behind.

Vast stores of timber are already on the ground, not that any part of the aerodrome buildings will be of wood, but solely for boxing for the concrete works. It is said, that a sawmill in the district is

working unbroken time to supply the hundreds of feet of timber necessary, and there is certainly enough wood in the great stacks to build a sizable home without the addition of any concrete.

Stacked on another part of the ground are what at first sight appear to be miscellaneous pieces of old iron. Closer examination, however, shows them to be bars of different lengths and thickness, which will play their part in the construction of the massive ferro-concrete hangars. Men are engaged in bending them to the required shapes.

Foundations for the first of the hangers are already taking shape. Riveters, working amid the deafening clatter inseparable from their noisy trade, are on the ground, and under which will lead New Zealand's aerial defence from Ohakea. At the present, there is not a single machine in the Dominion that might properly be called a fighting craft of modern design. The Vildebeest machines at Wigram are the latest defence craft that New Zealand boasts, and they, besides being several years old, are torpedo-bombers. Actually, the Vildebeests sent to New Zealand have no torpedo equipment, though they could be so fitted, being in the present condition reconnaissance bombers.

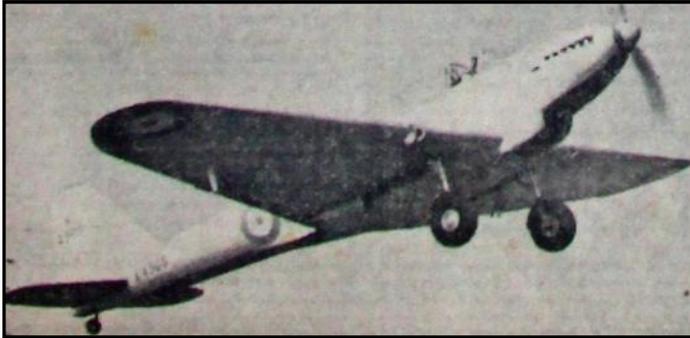
Fast, long-range bombers, seem to be the logical choice of machine for New Zealand's



defence. In fact, an official hint in this direction has already been given, though it has not yet been stated that an order such craft, or indeed for any, has been placed with English manufactures.

Valuable as they are for training, the Vildebeests are far too slow to offer serious operation to the type of machine that might in future years

menace New Zealand. The Baffins for Cook Strait Squadron are also obsolescent and far from fast, and one or two other machines are approaching the aged class. For Ohakea something better is required, and there is every indication that it will be provided.



New Zealand does not need 400 miles an hour single-seater monoplanes to protect her shores. These special purpose craft, of the type of the Hawker Hurricane, would be of little value here on account of their restricted range. Something of the type of the Bristol Blenheim, the Fairey Battle or the equally formidable Wellington would be of greater use to a country with miles of unprotected coastline to guard, and there are reasons to believe that squadrons of these machines, which are among the finest in the world of their type, will be housed in the hangars so swiftly taking shape at Ohakea.



**Robert Edwards - President PNMEC**

Well I have a long interest in engineering as my grandfather was a marine engineer and he would encourage me with it. And also my electrical interest as well at high school I made my first oscillating motor which worked! Others at the same year did not finish.

I started my apprenticeship with the Navy but the NZED wanted me and I thought that they would be better for me which I think was best for me.

I worked with mainly steam power on the electrical side but also mechanical fitting and turning too. This was a great time in my life looking back now. As I worked at Meremere, Huntley, Marsden Point, Kings Wharf Power station and also some other places.

As a young person living in Auckland and near the sea I had a love of boating and diving. I sailed P class boats and later large sailing boats. But also white water canoeing, rowing fours, fishing etc

After working as a electrical fitter for a few years I did my O E and went to England and got more interested with steam locos and traction engines so after I got back to NZ I visited my parents in Palmerston North and after a few jobs started at Massey University as a electrician and shortly later found myself in this club thanks to Stan Compton who I thank deeply for this. But happily I meet Judy and after marriage etc my hobby got left as money went to the family. So after the kids had grown up and doing their things in life, I got back into the club and started building an NZR class F 7¼" loco.

One project I have done is to build a track around the house I was lucky to get some track off the ex Rotorua Club and also made some. I will building some points and a run off area soon. This was a big job as I also had to landscape the gardens with a water fall and river with bridge and the lawns. And now I am happy to host the club January BBQ meeting. And at the moment I am trying to finish a NZR class LA with the help of Doug who got the boiler rebuilt but with a full time job and grandchildren who I love, time is always short for the workshop.

Robert Edwards

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