



Newsletter of THE PALMERSTON NORTH MODEL ENGINEERING CLUB INC

Managers of the "MARRINER RESERVE RAILWAY"

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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

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.

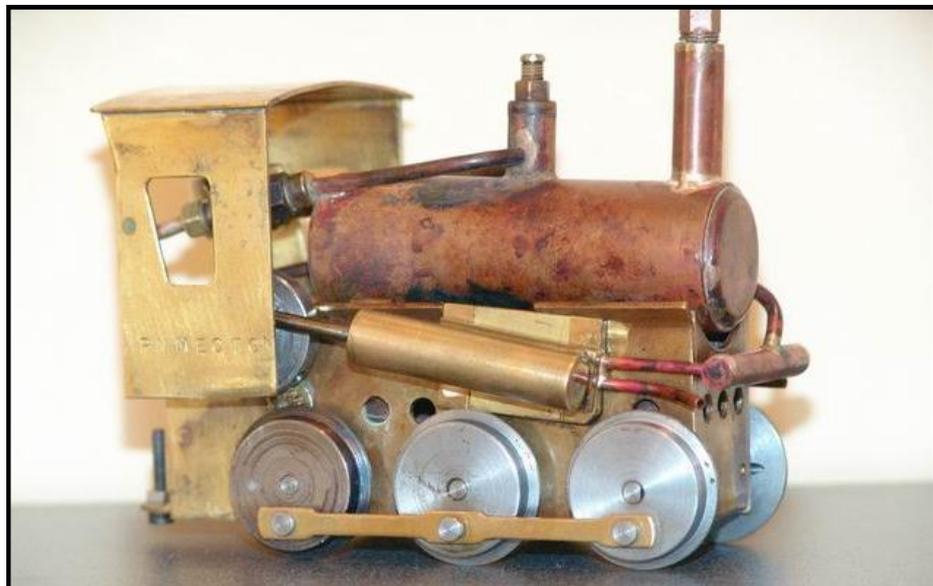
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This Months Featured Model



REPORT on the January Meeting.

Members gathered at the Vice-President's home for the Presidents B-B-Que. A fine warm evening and NO wind. Good to catch up with the members and hear who had done what over the Christmas break.



From what I saw and heard it appears that some members have some interesting projects underway. The dessert table looked rather impressive, very hard on those of us tied to restrictive diets!!!!

February Meeting

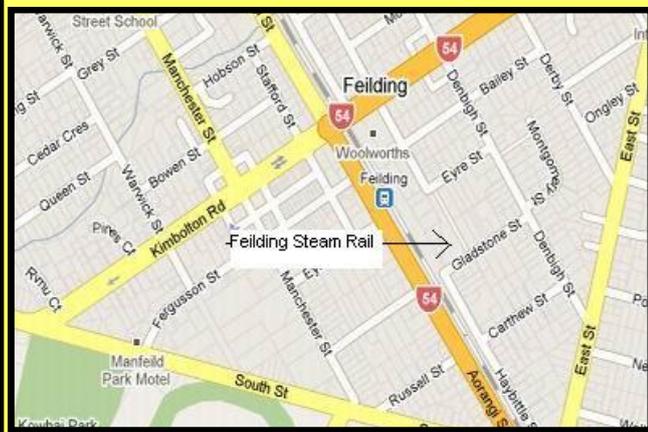
A visit has been arranged to **Feilding Steam Rail** on 25th Feb

A good opportunity to view the Wab, F163, and the X class steam locomotives. There is a Dsa diesel shunter and a number of carriages that are being overhauled.

Robust footwear is essential as railway ballast and sleepers do not make a good walking surface.

Please be on site by 7:20pm and enter by Gladstone Street

At 7:30pm we will divide our party into smaller groups and will then be shown around the depot.



FOR SALE

A Lux drill mill. It has eight speeds, and a three morse taper. It comes with a stand, 13mm chuck. The table length is 20 ¼", width 6 ½". Sideways travel 13" and fore and aft travel 6". It has a 1hp motor, colour is light green. Asking Price \$1,100 ono. David Neilsen 06 3551520

COMING EVENTS

Mid Week Run at Marriner Reserve Railway

23rd February between 10.00 am and 2 pm
23rd March between 10.00 am and 2 pm
Please contact Doug Chambers beforehand.

Track running at Marriner Reserve Railway

March 6th from 10am to 4pm
March 7th from 10am to 4pm
March 21st from 1pm to 4pm

Open Weekends

Palmerston North MEC
Locomotion Weekend 6th – 7th March

Robyn's Rebuild Part Four

Richard Lockett

A large component of the rebuilding of any model is the paint work, not an activity I particularly enjoy as it requires a degree of planning ahead, good prep work and patience. You can't rush it. There's a new book out called "How Not to Paint a Model Locomotive" It's very good apparently but I'm too scared to buy it in case I have to change my ways, something about old dogs.

The new owner's wished to keep with the original dark blue colour and as there was no chance of getting any of the original paint, it was off around the paint shops to see if I could get a spray can off the shelf of the right colour. Spray cans are good, clean in that you're not messing around with tins of paint and thinners and having to clean spray equipment. Paint N Paper Supa Store sell an American brand "Rust-oleum" gloss enamel and their Navy Blue was the closest I could get to Robyn's original colour. It was just a bit lighter, which would look really good. Now the Rust-oleum is nice paint but the spray nozzles are not, always blocking up so you pull it out and replace it with one off a Dulux quick dry can which is not good paint, rubs off in your fingers. For bits not subjected to heat Watty! killrust epoxy gloss enamel is a good one.

The closing date for the next issue of The Generator is Friday 12th March

For the hot bits I use Supa Cheap's Septone engine enamel, gloss black.

Actually any black bits that can be fitted into my oven, I do with engine enamel as once they've been cooked the finish is a lot more durable. Being the sole shareholder in my oven, I don't have to seek the permission from other interested parties for the use of the oven to do this type of work and it doesn't seem to effect the other applications to which it's used.

Back to the bare metal and as a good paint job starts with the preparation, rough the surfaces up with a coarse



wet and dry particularly your brass bits and smoothing off any soldered joints.

Next clean with a solvent to remove any dirt, grease, oils etc, remembering that in handling, your fingers are putting oils etc back onto the surfaces.

As a first coat I use Septone's Super Etch Primer, generally a couple of coats and then

Septone's primer filler to fill any surface irregularities and to build up some thickness so that we can give it a rub with a 1200 wet and dry (wet) abrasive paper to produce a smooth surface for the top coats. Repeating if necessary, the smoother the surface the better the paint spreads. I have an old fridge in which I hang sprayed parts in to dry so as to minimize any dust, insects etc in the air landing on the job. It's important to read and follow the instructions on the cans as each brand has different drying and recoat times as if you do a recoat outside of the required timeframes it will result in a wrinkled mess and maybe having to start again.

With Robyn fully assembled a steam test was next, to set the safety valves at their blow off pressure, check that the accumulation is within the permitted limits and the operation of the loco in general. We had trouble getting the safety valves to open at all and it took a while to realise that I had assembled the valves with the wrong springs in them. Right springs fitted and steam raised again to set the valves at 80 psi, sweet only now they wouldn't shut without dropping about 30psi in pressure, no good like that and I thought I would have to make some new valves, not a ten minute job so a track test was organised for the next day.

As soon as Robyn was moving on the rails, the valves settled down, with no noticeable drop in pressure from opening to shutting visible on the gauge. What goes here, much scratching of heads! We could only think that solids etc remained in the boiler from its clean out and as more water was going through the boiler and as a result getting cleaner the valves started working as intended. The valves were getting plenty of work because Robyn was generating steam with ease, even light engine, so perhaps we should be cleaning the insides of our boilers more often. With a successful test completed Robyn was then delivered to her new home which leaves an empty bay in the roundhouse over here in Feilding. Some more scratching of the head.

THIS MONTH'S FEATURED MODEL.

The Locomotive PnMECTON

The Spell checker doesn't like the word PnMECTON but I think it's pretty good name for our entry in 2010 Les Moore Challenge at this years model engineering convention that was held in Nelson in early January. This challenge was a PNMEC creation from back in 2002. It's important that we as a club have an entry in each event, this we have achieved on all occasions except for the 2008 Manukau Convention, which was for a steam powered water lifting device.

The Nelson Challenge was for a 0 gauge steam loco of some sort to be built and run in three tests to determine the winner. Construction of our loco commenced just before Christmas 2009 leaving about ten days build time before it had to be in Nelson. It was only going to be a simple machine, Oscillating cylinders, meths burner etc. One of the tests was to be the slowest over a set distance so gearing it down had to be the way to go, so a visit to Bruce Geange's workshop to borrow some ex gas meter pinions and gears, stole a pressure gauge from one of Murray Bold's G gauge loco's, used the cylinder design from the schools traction engine. I did some sketches on my drawing board to come up with an 0-6-0 wheel layout with the cylinders mounted above the wheels, driving a separate crankshaft through two sets of reduction gears to the coupled wheels. The meths reservoir and burner were in between the frames and this was to be PnMECTON's down fall. Not being able to control the size of the flame, not being able to do anything about it without a redesign and new chassis (no time for that) we had to go with what we had.

Now the club has passed a milestone with the one hundredth boiler on the books and it was thought fitting that boiler identification number ZPN 100 be given to a club machine hence the name of this locomotive. So how did it perform on the day, a Friday evening to be precise, well it did perform but not with any distinction, took too long to raise any pressure and then used all available steam in about 5 sec's but it did go.

I have some idea's re a new burner which will (I hope) fit into the space available which should transform its operation.

So who won I hear you ask, well the Hamilton Model Engineers take this event pretty seriously and spend a couple of years perfecting an entry, this time building a model of an A and G Price geared bush locomotive which looked good and performed well and any one who builds a model of our industrial heritage deserves to win anyway in my book whether it go's or not.

In keeping with the spirit of the challenge any club that manages to get an entry there on the day is a winner.

Richard Lockett



The Hamilton Club Entry

LETTER FROM ENGLAND

by Stan Compton

I was lucky to be taken out for the day by Brian to the Model Boat Show, held at 'The Fosse', the same location as the Midlands Exhibition. There were so many ship models on display, tugs are always popular, also 'Clyde Puffers', there is one of these still in use taking passengers who can help by firing the boiler etc. Now that would be a real holiday if I could climb down the ladder into the engine room!! The display of the Thames Barge Association was interesting; these vessels have always intrigued me ever since I read 'A Steady Trade' by Tristan Jones. It describes life when the author was fourteen years old and was found his first job as ships boy on a well found Thames Barge. The crew consisted of the skipper, a seventeen year old deckhand and the boy. They sailed to Germany in 1938 taking scrap steel, the only navigation aids were a compass and a barometer for weather information, yet they delivered their load and returned home with no problems. On display was a sample of original red sail canvas which was so heavy I hate to think of what hard work it must have been handling them, even building a model of one is not a simple affair. Many kitset models of course, all very nice to see, I found the deep sea trawlers had very deep hulls, this is why they can sail in gale force conditions. The steam drifters of old were so long and narrow, it must have been a hard life handling nets. I am not qualified to comment on the workmanship of many of the models on display but when the upper deck is removed, revealing all the electronics controlling the motors, steering, gunnery etc. on a naval vessel, one can see the expense involved. The size of the model of the Japanese battleship 'Yamato' was very impressive. At 72,000 tons it made our own ships 'Rodney' and 'Nelson' look ineffective as they were only about half the size. 'Yamato' carried about seventy anti-aircraft guns but American Navy torpedo and dive bombers were still able to sink the Goliath of the Sea during the battle of Okinawa. We hear about Governments wasting money on good projects that get scrapped, but it is peanuts compared to when in 1637 the English King ordered a ship of 1600 tons to be built. It was just 234 feet long at the waterline and named 'Sovereign of the Seas' and it cost in

today's money 450,000,000 pounds,(a thousand million \$NZ) The description on the model on display told us that two more small warships were built, 'Greyhound' and 'Roebuck' out of the scrap timber left over!!!!!! The big ship was so elaborate it nearly caused the collapse of the Government of the day. Seeing all the variety of warship models made me reflect on what a crazy world this is, all that expense, yet poverty abounds the world over.

I would have loved to have seen the boat being rowed by a skeleton on the boating pool that I saw up North last year, or the Chinese fisherman in his model dory with the name 'Wun Hung Low' on the bow.

In the Midlands near Birmingham is the steepest incline on British Mainline Railways. It is called the Lickey Incline. At 37 ½ to 1 it is small beer to some overseas railways, even so since the line was built about 1845 it has required, during the days of steam, a number of locomotives, with crews standing by to bank most trains up the 3 ½ miles of grade. You can guess the problems going down with unfitted freight wagons also, but the Railway Company built a heavy four cylindered banking locomotive that was called 'Big Bertha' after the massive gun the Germans built to fire shells across the English Channel from France in 1917. 'Big Bertha' spent its working life on the Lickey Incline until one of the cylinders fractured and it was scrapped.

We had a talk by a man who in his youth fired banking locomotives on the Incline. He loved the job and told us about one Sunday, it was a quiet day and as no trains were booked to require help his driver went home, close by, to have a nice cooked dinner. At the same time our speaker's father arrived to see his son at work. A train whistle was heard approaching asking for assistance. "Get aboard Dad' I have got to bank the train." The father had no idea what it was like on the footplate of a lively bucking small tank locomotive working hard up that grade. All quite illegal of course but the 17 year old saved the day. He knew his job and the powers that be were none the wiser. For years after his father told people, "I never knew my lad had it in him, I thought he was a dead loss!!"

A Garrett locomotive was brought in to perform banking duties but was hopeless at the task, consuming vast amounts of coal just to climb the grade. Something had to be done to get rid of it. They finally succeeded by removing the main crank-pin retaining collar that holds the connecting-rod in place.

When the connecting-rod came off it wrecked one side of the unit, so the engine was scrapped. That collar is still a prized memento!!!

I can report that my new project, a regulator clock, is making steady progress now I have rebuilt my wheel-cutting machine.

I like the humour of WW2 servicemen, I read about the pilot of a 'Waco' glider who felt so vulnerable in his pilot's seat with no protection underneath, so he bolted a piece of armour plate in place. He said that he didn't want to be shot in the butt or the family jewels!!!

FIRING DAYS

By Harold Gasson

I expected Bill to lift the regulator with his left hand when we started off, but not a bit of it, he walked over to my side, turned his back on me, caught hold of the regulator in both hands and pushed it right up into the cab roof.

Only a Great western 'Hall' would stand such treatment; she took off like a scalded cat without one trace of a slip, and my carefully prepared fire had great holes torn out of it.



Passing Moreton I began to fire her as Bill wound the lever back, but he snapped down the clip at 35% cut off. It was going to be a hairy trip. My small lumps of coal never touched the fire, they went over the brick arch, through the tubes, out of the chimney and back down onto the tender again!!!! The blast from the exhaust was something to be heard; I half expected to see the bricks fly out of Moreton Bridge as we passed underneath.

He shut off early for Cholsey, so I had a chance to regain on the boiler. There was only one way to fire for Bill and that was to keep piling it in, and if the lumps of coal were big enough to go through the fire hole so much the better, at least they stopped in long enough to burn. For all that, though, Bill was a kindly man, even if his method of driving made sure of no employment in South Wales coal pits, and I was to enjoy my week with him.

I can remember with pleasure that first short, sharp, burst of fast running between Slough and Paddington. We came up to Southall with the chimney kicking up one hell of a racket, hanging on the whistle chain as we approached the long bridge preceding the station.

Passengers packed on the platform receded like waves on the sea-shore as we burst under the bridge, and we looked back along the train to see the dust and newspapers flying, with hands grasping desperately at hats of all shapes. Bill looked over at me with a grin on his face, he knew what was making me laugh, he had seen hats going flying before.

We ran into Paddington on time, where my education into the so-called 'weaker sex' was to begin. I was a well brought up simple country boy who had been taught that ladies were ladies. I knew there were the other kind, but being a clean living lad I had no contact with that other kind. My innocence was to be shattered by an accident.

I lit the flare lamp and walked around the frame to light the headlamps. This job done I blew out the flare lamp and jumped down on to the platform with one headlamp in my hand to place on the tender bracket.

I had timed it just right; the passengers we had brought with us were tearing past like they do at Paddington, always in a hurry. One of these passengers was a young lady of ample proportions; she had a bosom that made the lads look twice, and covering this bosom was a spotless white blouse.

As I landed on the platform the dirty charred paraffin soaked stump of the flare lamp went right across that white covered bosom leaving a long black streak. She stood quite still for a moment, looked at me, then at her blouse, then that bosom started to heave as bosoms do under stress, but the sound that issued from her mouth was nothing like a lady should use!!! She sounded off like a factory hooter, using words that were quite unbecoming! I got the impression that she was upset, and when she started to question the validity of my parents being married, I knew she was upset.

Poor Bill hung over the cab window helpless with laughter. The coaches were drawn off our engine so Bill blew off the brakes ready to follow; it was time to make a move. One more bit of indignity came my way; this distraught young lady (?) said that she would report me to the Midland Railway manager, and me a Great Western man!! I was shattered. She swung

round on her heels to leave and the string bag she had in the crook of her arm clouted the heavy headlamp I still had in my hand. There was tinkle of glass and half a pint of gin cascaded on the dusty platform.

Bill, bless him, was quick off the mark. He had already started to move back. I flung the headlamp onto the footplate and leapt after it. This was one time to leave Paddington for Ranleigh Bridge turntable without a lamp on the tender bracket!!

For the rest of the week when running into Paddington we took precautions not to be recognised, in railway language, 'From Tuesday to Saturday inclusive'.

When we stopped at the buffers, Bill would take off his cap, take out his teeth, and put on a pair of black horn-rimmed reading glasses. Each day that young lady would have look up into the cab, but she would see an almost bald man with sunken cheeks, wearing glasses and bent over a book. Bill, of course, picked this time to bring his train journal up to date. And the Fireman? Well he was standing on the frame with his back to the boiler on the blind side of the platform, so she never did see him again. That was the week I decided to grow a moustache that I still wear, thirty years later.

Track Reconstruction at MRR

A burst of enthusiasm during late January, saw 14 metres of rail track refurbished from the end of the Kanuka Curve to the Viaduct. This involved lifting the track, breaking out the concrete base, boxing set up to a new vertical alignment, new concrete poured into the trench and the track straightened, painted and replaced onto new base.

Sounds easy but that's four days work with a good crew. As it was the school holidays we had a young crew, fit and eager to learn the skills of railway construction as is done at the MRR. It always seems to be as soon as one orders a truck load of concrete the weather turns to showers of rain, which delayed us by a day. A brief shower came across after we had finished trowling it off. Continuation of showers over the next couple of days meant that we didn't have to water the pour to slow the drying process, this saved a couple of trips down to the reserve. The photo shows Ken Neilsen's Netta 0-8-0 tank loco, this being the first locomotive to sample the

refurbished section of track. A big thanks to all who gave time to assist with this project.



PHOTOS FROM THE EARLY 1980s

Bob Owen came across these photos when he was having a clean out recently. The first shows Ron Walker and his 3 1/2" gauge NZR K being followed closely by his faithful Border Collie.

Note that the track is all flat and there is no sign of the embankments that were to come into being later in the decade.



This photo shows your Editor with his 'Simplex' passing the store shed and the first steaming bays. Evidently graffiti was a problem in those days as well.



Anne Compton admiring her husband's 7 1/4" gauge 'George the Fifth'. Note the children's slide in the background. Shortly after this the playground was moved to the other side of the road as problems came about through children running across the track to get to the playground equipment.

Locomotion 6 - 7 March

The committee request the members help in the Station and or the Kitchen during the weekend.

Please bring something for the morning and afternoon tables. We will feed you at lunchtime and have a BBQ for dinner.

Thanks