



# INSIDE MOTION

News and Views from the  
TYNESIDE SOCIETY of MODEL and EXPERIMENTAL ENGINEERS  
No. 20 October 2021

## Jimmy Stephenson Memorial Day Steve Lowe

Sunday 26th September dawned dry and bright and remained so all day for what turned out to be a wonderful memorial event for Jimmy. Notwithstanding the concerns members may have had regarding Covid, an excellent turn-out was the order of the day - such was the status and popularity for our late Chairman, one of TSMEE's finest and a member for well over 60 years.

Both tracks were soon in operation. Brian Nicholls and Jim Mountjoy with their Koppel locomotives were on the ground-level track, with Lindsay Oliver making up the trio with his Wren. The Club's electric loco was also out with a rake of coaches offering rides to the young at heart. The raised track too soon became busy with Keith Parry's lovely A4 getting us underway followed by Dave Nesbitt's much-awaited 5 inch gauge LMS Pacific "Princess Victoria", a triumph of around 35 year's work and a magnificent example of locomotive building. For the majority of us it was overwhelming to say the least !!! Eddie and Joe Gibbons were also in attendance with their Standard 4 tank and 4F locos - all in all an excellent turn-out.

With the arrival of Jimmy's family, the new memorial bench was placed onto the raised track platform. This was designed and produced by Jimmy's son Ed, who had it made with the help of a fabricator friend, an excellent piece of engineering and an appropriate addition to our site, it will sit alongside Andy and Ida Robson's bench on the platform, so in spirit the two auld "Gateshead men" can observe the running days at their leisure, a very fitting tribute indeed !!

As lunchtime approached we were invited to gather around the Signal Box, Jimmy's favourite place, where Linda, our Secretary, opened the formal part of the event with the welcome and introductions before handing over to Peter Newby, our Chairman. Peter gave a warm and fitting tribute to Jim's unwavering contribution to a lifetime's service to the Society, after which he invited Jim's widow Doreen to unveil the name board on the Signal Box. "Stephenson Halt" was the name chosen by the members as the most appropriate reminder of "Jim's place", controlling the trains on every running day. Additionally, a commemorative blue plaque adorns the gable end of the box.





A superb running buffet was then opened in the Clubhouse. The tables were overflowing with food, and a massive “thankyou” must go to Mary Tomlinson, Liz Evans, Mary Graham and Linda Nicholls who worked tirelessly throughout the day to keep us all fed and watered.

Outside, the conviviality continued apace with much reminiscing and tales of days gone by enjoying Jimmy’s company. The afternoon had by now taken on the flavour of an open weekend, much missed by us all since the arrival of the dreaded Covid restrictions.

The Garden Railway was in full swing as usual, and a couple of the boat lads were also down on the lake with their vessels enjoying the sunshine. Additionally we had set up an open tent at the end of the workshop where members could display part-built models.

The afternoon would not have been complete without the traditional raffle. It always goes down well and this time in aid of our new grass cutter fund, which again is particularly poignant as that was Jimmy’s regular steed - he was always to be seen busy cutting the grass !! Many thanks go to all our prize donators.

I believe the signing-in book showed at least 80 in attendance, making it a truly memorable and successful day and a very fitting end to the summer. Jimmy Stephenson was a very capable and productive model engineer, a great character, friend and mentor who was always at the centre of Club life. He will live on in our memories forever.

## **Club matters**

### **Clubhouse Access**

As Autumn and then Winter approach, it is clear that the wholly outdoor life we’ve been living since the easing of Covid restrictions is unsustainable, and to enable some measure of social activity to continue as the weather turns, we must start allowing people indoors again.

Serving of tea and coffee will continue outside whenever practicable, and Members are expected to continue maintaining a high standard of Covid hygiene when using the facilities.

The Clubhouse will be well-ventilated to avoid “fug” and so may not seem too hospitable at first, but it’s a start. At least it’s shelter from the wind and rain ! Everyone has the choice of using it or not.

Signing in and out remains a requirement.

## Member's Musings

### A Visit to the Cleveland Association of Model Engineers

Lindsay Oliver

Nicola and myself were invited to visit the Cleveland Society on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> September on the occasion of their first open weekend since lockdown started. We travelled to their track which is situated in the grounds of the Tees Cottage Pumping Station, Darlington, which is an English Heritage site. On arrival, we were warmly welcomed and, as always, were ably assisted in the unloading of my Wren Engine.

Nicola and myself then viewed the site, which is extremely interesting. The restored Compound Beam Engine was in steam and pumping water from the river Tees into two large ponds, we then had a tour of the Boiler House which has two, three pass Lancashire Boilers, one of which was in steam and running the Beam Engine.



We continued to the Blacksmith's Shop where they were making Garden Hanging Baskets from old horse shoes, followed by a visit to the Twin Cylinder Gas Engine, which was running a three cylinder water pump, pumping water into a third pond on the site.

After lunch, we steamed up the Wren for an afternoon of passenger pulling. The track is 5" and 7¼" ground level and is L shaped with a turntable at each end and is just over ¼ mile in length. Both Nicola and myself ran the Wren until the open-day closed at 5pm. We both thoroughly enjoyed the day and were made very welcome by all the members and volunteers.



We will hopefully be back for their next open day in October, and we can certainly recommend a visit.

## Sunderland Open Day

Peter Newby

On Sunday the 19<sup>th</sup> of September I visited the City of Sunderland Model Engineers open day along with Lindsey Oliver. I took my little 5" 0-4-0 electric loco along and had a really enjoyable few hours. Their track is raised level 7 1/4" – 5" – 3 1/2" the curves are very tight the wheels were squealing on most curves and the inclines short and steep. Despite all this I had my knuckles rapped for going too fast.

I was a member of Sunderland club up to 1978 but knew no one. All my acquaintances were now model engineering in a higher place. What was interesting is that most of the people I knew including the then committee were virtually unknown to the current membership. I think a lesson should be learnt in that we should have some way of being able to remember past members that are no longer with us – food for thought.

I think that all the local clubs should have a closer links. The current committee at Sunderland seem like a decent bunch and keen to see their club develop.

## A Rose without Thorns

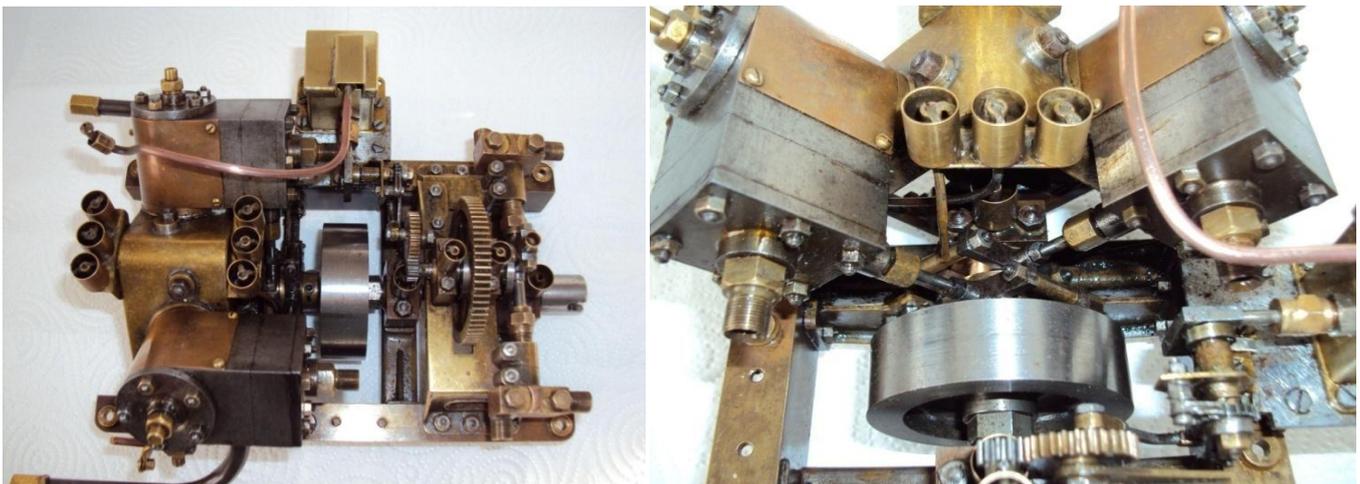
James Jamieson

Some members will remember a couple of years ago, I brought up to one of the project days a steam powered Straight Runner model boat "Rose" which I was in the process of rebuilding.



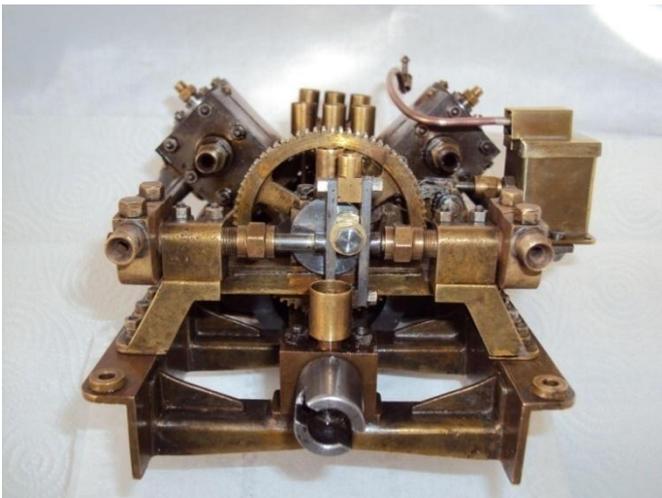
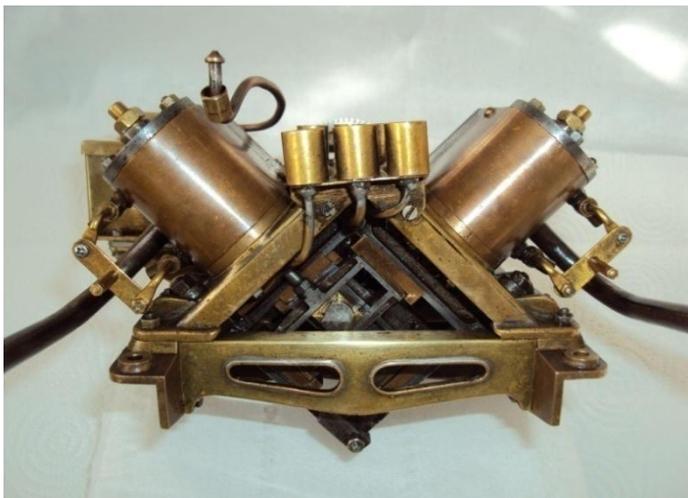
The boat and plant were built in around 1950 by George Leach, a member of Heaton & District Model Power Boat Club who spent most of his working life as an engineer at North East Marine, Wallsend. George was a prolific and accomplished model engineer and as "Rose" was his third boat he wanted to design and make something different from the usual single cylinder steam powered craft.

With that in mind he set about constructing a hull from thin galvanised steel sheet which measures 5 foot 3 inches long and has a 9 inch beam.



The engine he wanted to be a total different so he designed a "Scotch Crank" Vee twin double acting steam engine each cylinder being  $\frac{5}{8}$ " bore and  $\frac{3}{4}$ " stroke. He chose the "Scotch Crank" design to keep the engine as compact as possible because he knew a conventional vee twin would be difficult to squeeze into the hull. The engine drives an integral twin cylinder water pump, each cylinder being  $\frac{3}{16}$ " bore and  $\frac{1}{2}$ " stroke, a mechanical lubrication pump and a single propeller shaft drives a  $3 \frac{1}{2}$ " diameter by  $3 \frac{1}{2}$ " pitch twin blade brass propeller. Steam was originally provided by a 4" diameter "pot" type copper boiler with a "D" shaped flue running

longitudinally, there were multiple ½” fire tubes running from the flat part of the “D” to the top of the boiler shell, the boiler was fired by a twin jet paraffin blow lamp and the plant ran at 50 psi.



I first remembered George running the boat in numerous competitions when I joined the boat club in the mid 60's and I was captivated by its performance and the unique sound of its vee twin engine. George ran the boat regularly but as he got older he allowed it to be run by other members but kept a very close eye on how they looked after it, sadly after he died the boat had numerous people running it and it was evident when I managed to rescue it, it had been poorly maintained in the intervening years. The boiler and the paraffin blow lamp were leaking, the hull paint work was flaking, the interior was caked in grease and oil and the superstructure varnish was cracked and damaged.

My first job was to thoroughly clean everything and see what was required to get her back running. After realising the task ahead of me I decided to contact Stu Davidson who I have known for over fifty years and has a vast knowledge of steam powered craft, for his advice. As usual Stu immediately offered his services to construct a new boiler and blowlamp and assist me in any way he could.

It has taken me longer than I thought to get it back on to the water, and the last 18 months of COVID restrictions I'm sure TSMEE members will agree has not helped. The boat has been completely repainted inside and out, the decks and superstructure have been stripped and re-varnished and with Stu's help a new paraffin blowlamp and 3" dia copper boiler with 26 x ½” firetubes has been constructed.

A feedwater preheater has been fitted and most of the pipework has been renewed, the engine itself has been thoroughly checked over and the mechanical water feed pump overhauled with new balls fitted and glands repacked.



Over the last couple of months Stu and I have test run the boat on a number of occasions and it's taken a little while to work out the steaming characteristics of the new configuration of old engine and pumps and new boiler and blowlamp. At the time of writing we think we've cracked it, with a half glass of water on the boiler and the feed water bypass cracked open the pumps maintain the boiler level without a problem. Now that we're happy my next job is to get the decks screwed back on permanently and run it in competition, I must admit I'm not bothered about winning anything It'll just be fantastic to get the "Old Lady" back on the water and hear that marvellous engine note again, a real trip down memory lane.



## Postamble

September has come and gone – a bit of a non-month in some respects as we lost two Sundays to events which put the Park off-limits, but the memorial day certainly more than compensated.

Thanks as ever to those who made this issue possible. James' "boat" article reminds us that not everything at TSMEE is about railways.

As ever, too, the Editorial cupboard is again bare. Please get writing – it would be nice to have another bumper Christmas edition for you all to enjoy and there's less than eight weeks to go ...

## Contact information

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# Memorial Day Gallery





