

Beech Hurst News Sheet

Issue 15 – August 2024

Chairman's Notes:

Our Wednesday running has gone well so far, with one more to go, and the weather has held up. There are just a few more running days left and I'm pleased to say the running slots are already filled. We are hosting a visit from our old friends from the Chelmsford club on Saturday 7th September.

Our last social evening was a very pleasant BBQ, last Saturday evening, which brings it home just how quickly the season is flying by. The track already has to be swept free of leaves when making a check before running commences!

The last running day is Saturday September 21st, and immediately after this, we will begin track repairs to make use of the daylight and painting conditions before autumn sets in with a vengeance. This summer has already seen the Thursday gang painting and turning the section in the cutting, from kitchen corner to long tunnel, since that is a very unpleasant area to work in during wet winter periods. Roy will be looking for volunteers for the autumn track work, and we may do an extra day in the week initially, subject to support, to get ahead before the weather deteriorates. If you have enjoyed using the track this year, please consider giving a day or two to assist, it is much appreciated, and many hands do indeed make it easier.

After the running season ends, on Winter Saturdays, the club will open between approx. 9 am until 5 pm for members to use or come and help with the maintenance programme. Thursdays are usually around 9.30 until 4 pm for mostly maintenance work. Enjoy the end of season running. Last, but not least, I welcome new members Bruce and Paul, who have already been working hard around the club painting and gardening. Much appreciated.

Roy P writes: Sleepers

Back in January I reported that for our sleepers we had been seeking an alternative wood to Russian Larch as it is no longer available commercially in good enough quality. With the support of Covers, we tried Lignia which was no use and then Iroko. Iroko looked excellent but the electrical conductivity when wet was unacceptable. Another heat-treated wood was tried but this had very poor retention for the nails. Having exhausted our options, Covers have subsequently found a supply of Russian Larch which they believe may meet our requirement. An order for 2000 sleepers has now been placed on the understanding that if they are unsuitable, we will get our money back. Watch this space!

Autumn track work: Roy P writes:

This Autumn, track work will involve cleaning and painting the steelwork and replacing the rails and sleepers from last Autumn's completed section at the end of the tennis court straight to the end of the jungle. Although we turned the outside rail last Autumn the sleepers are in poor condition and the inside rail is heavily worn, hence the decision to do a complete track renewal.

Please let me know by email indicating which of the following Thursdays and Saturdays you hope you will be able to help:

26th and 28th September, 10th and 12th October, 17th and 19th October, 24th and 26th October, 31st October and 2nd November, 7th and 9th November.

Although work will hopefully be undertaken on the above Thursdays and Saturdays, last year we lost too much time due to wet conditions. This year, I would like to be able to work on other weekdays if we have similar weather-related problems. With this in mind, and especially if you are unlikely to be able to help on the Thursdays or Saturdays listed above, please let me know if you might be available on other weekday dates. If I have enough Members offering to help on a few additional days during October and November and I need the additional help, I will be able to choose days best suited to other Members. Hence, please add to your email which additional or alternative October/November week-day dates would suit you.

Email: royc.preston@btinternet.com

Damage to the track: Roy P writes:

At some time just prior to 1st August there was damage to the track just outside the South tunnel gates. Logs had been thrown, see photo below left, onto the track from the bridge parapet, luckily causing only one broken sleeper, see below right, probably because the logs were partly rotten on their outsides.



Report on the Baked Potatoes and Beans Evening 20th July

Saturday the 20th July was a good afternoon of passenger running with fine weather and thankfully no showers. This was followed in the evening with Baked Potatoes and Beans served up by Val with fruit pies for dessert. It was a pleasant social evening enjoyed by all.



Visit of the Chelsea Pensioners

On Wednesday 14th August the Haywards Heath & Beech Hurst Bowls Club hosted a team from The Royal Hospital Chelsea (The Chelsea Pensioners). On arrival, they marched from the car park to the tune of a piper, see photo below left, and after an address by the Haywards Heath Mayor Stephanie Inglesfield, see photo below right, they had a ride on two of our trains, see photos below. The event went well and was much appreciated by the Chelsea Pensioners.



An excellent day at Beech Hurst

Public running this year has been a most enjoyable experience, not only for Members running the railway but most importantly the gratification expressed by the public. The many happy faces and expressions of appreciation and thanks have made the whole experiences this year most gratifying. Below and on page 6 are just a few photos of one well attended running day.



Linda looking after the Station



Elaine in the Token Office



Bruce driving Trogon



Sam driving Wharfedale

A few photos cont'd



Steve S driving the LNER 2-8-0



Tim driving the Royal Alex



Graham Mundy driving the Class 33



Bruce and Mike P driving their 'Bird' locos Trogon and Torito