

Sussex Miniature Locomotive Society Ltd

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BEECH HURST NEWS



Cover picture: -

A Very Sad Loss: Following a brave fight against cancer, SMLS member Bob Youldon sadly passed away in August. Known to many at Beech Hurst, and one of our longest serving members, he will be much missed, not only for his jokes & stories but his engineering knowledge too.

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Editor's Notes

It is with deep sadness that I start this edition with the news of the passing of Bob Youldon. An SMLS member since the 1960's, he will be sadly missed by those who knew him, not only for his endless jokes and stories but also for his endless engineering knowledge too. A master storyteller and a master model engineer, who backed up this theory by producing numerous outstanding models. Furthermore, he was always happy to share his experiences and knowledge with those who needed it. Whether you were making a boiler or setting valve gear, or anything else, his advice was second to none and I, like many before me, have more than benefitted from talking with Bob. A true gentleman who will be greatly missed, not only at Beech Hurst but also on the exhibition circuit where many an hour was spent by the stand talking about all things model engineering...

As we are now into September, the running season has but a couple of weeks remaining and it is fair to say that 2019 has been a good year overall. Aside our running days, we have also welcomed many other clubs and visitors to our railway days, we have also helped Sainsbury's celebrate their 150th anniversary by offering the opportunity for staff from the Haywards Heath store to volunteer as part of their service in the community initiative. Several of their team helped out during the summer, including at our July charity day.

From the June edition, I thank Andrew S & Dan for their articles and pictures.

Due to a recent holiday, this edition is slightly later than I had originally planned and is current up to the end of August. Recent and upcoming visits by the Focus Model Engineers, Crowborough and Polegate clubs will be covered in the October edition, which I plan to release mid next month. This newsletter includes reports and pictures from the visits by 10th Haywards Heath Beavers, the U3A Railway Studies Group, The Yews and our BBQ held over the August Bank Holiday weekend. In addition to the usual writings, there is also an updated Diary to take us through to 2020, so please read on and enjoy...

Andrew B

Chairman's Notes

We have a very limited time left of the running season and it is amazing how quickly it has gone. Our final weekend will see us operate trains until 20:00 on the Saturday night, an event that last year was very popular with ourselves and the public. Also, we look forward to visits from the Focus Model Engineers, Crowborough and Polegate societies in September too. The Wednesdays were busy as usual and as much as we were fairly tight for staff, we did manage. One Wednesday was washed out due to the weather which has so far been our only wash out of the season. Thank you to everyone who has helped keep the railway running during the season, it is a big task maintaining such a high level of service. I want to give a special mention to Sam Hope who has worked virtually non stop in this period doing various jobs and without his help in particular it would have been more of a struggle. We held our traditional August BBQ on the Bank Holiday Saturday and despite being low in numbers due to holidays and other commitments it turned out to be a fun evening with three trains running.

Hamish & I ran 'Conway', with the lads on the 'MLV' and London Transport tram. The gardening has been kept in order by various members and is looking tidy. I include a photo taken by Geoff (see picture below) of the crew on the BBQ morning who did a major job, grass cutting, hedge trimming and strimming.



We always need help with these kind of jobs, so if anyone has a spare hour now and then, please do consider this for a weekend morning. Thank you to all that have helped with the gardening during the last year. Unfortunately I have some sad news to report with the passing of our beloved member Bob Youldon. Bob had been at Beech Hurst for nearly 50 years and despite him not being a regular at the club in recent times, I grew close to him in later years. Bob had been ill for some time and I want to send my personal condolences to his family and friends, it is a very sad loss but I will personally remember him for his courageous spirit and constant jokes despite his illness. Thanks for the memories Bob.

On the social side, we have decided to no longer arrange a Bonfire / Firework night at the club; the main reasons are having the new nursing home right next door to us and the gradual lack of attendance during the last couple of years. The baked potatoes, beans and cheese which we had at this event will now happen on the evening run in September and Val will be serving as usual. A list will be on the whiteboard, so no name, no food. We will still continue with the New Year's Day run with food supplied at lunchtime. Our Christmas event will be coming round before we know it and a reminder that it will be on 4 nights between Friday 13th and Monday 16th December between 16:00 – 19:00. Any help that can be offered will be gratefully received. There is a roster sheet on the whiteboard in the clubhouse where you can put your names down if you have not already. In the off season, Roy P will require help with the track work from the end of September onwards; a sign up list for help is now on the whiteboard in the clubhouse for those who can assist during October.

Dan

Recent Visits to Beech Hurst

Following a busy June, we then had a few weeks break before another batch of visits from mid-July onwards. Starting on Tuesday 16th, we welcomed the 10th Haywards Heath Beavers to Beech Hurst for a tour of our premises and a train ride. The youngsters had the opportunity to learn about how a steam locomotive works with Chris S, followed by a tour of the clubhouse, workshop and carriage shed with Mike W, and finally a train ride behind the 'King Arthur'. Andrew S acted as host with me (driver) and Lorema (guard) on the train. The evening went well and it is safe to say the youngsters were enthusiastic and certainly energetic! They are our potential next generation, so time spent now may well reap rewards in future years. Thanks to all those who helped out during the evening and luckily we were blessed with a dry and sunny one!

The following Wednesday, 24th, we then hosted the U3A Railway Studies Group at Beech Hurst. Made up of almost entirely retired folk, this group were treated to a similar tour as per the Beavers, however the level of knowledge required and questions asked were on a different scale! Split into groups, they learnt about steam locomotive operation with myself, had a tour of our premises with Mike W, talked about the proposed Learning Centre with Roy P and then enjoyed a train ride with Adam & Tom acting as drivers. There was also time for a tea and cake interlude midway through. Unlike some of the Beavers, the U3A group represent potential current members and all of whom have some interest in railways.

Perhaps we will be lucky and sign up one or two! Thanks to all those who helped out, including Adam who lit a fire in his 'B1' locomotive especially for the group and again we were lucky that it was a dry and mostly sunny evening! Hopefully this visit can be repeated in future years...

Andrew B

Charity Day – By Andrew B

A group from The Yews has been visiting Beech Hurst for many years and 2019 was no exception. Monday 29th July was pencilled in for their annual train ride and in addition we decided to run later this year, and then donate any extra monies to their charitable cause. We ran a steam hauled train and a couple of electric ones too, and were helped in no small part by 3 staff from Sainsbury's as part of their volunteering in the community initiative. With a fine and sunny afternoon forecast we started at 13:00 and continued through until 16:00 in between which we carried over 400 paid rides and at least another 100 from The Yews themselves. This on a largely unadvertised (except online) afternoon at the very start of the summer holidays! The team from Sainsbury's worked on the station, acted as guard and later each had a drive on one of the electric trains. Their help was most appreciated and overall it was a lovely afternoon – far better than being sat behind a desk! Thanks through these pages to all those who helped during the day, including Clive H, Dan, Edward, Geoff, both Graham's, Mike W, Roy P, Sam H & I, and without whom we could not have run this service (see below and next page for pictures).



Picture above: One of the Sainsbury's staff driving Sam's Class 31 with Roy P



Picture above: Clive passes signal 2 with 'Wharfedale' and a fully loaded train



Picture above: Another volunteer from Sainsbury's driving Sam's 31 with Mike W

Focus Model Engineers visit Beech Hurst

On the back of their visit in 2018, the newly formed Focus Model Engineers were back at Beech Hurst again this summer and like last year they ran most of our service on the first Wednesday of the school holidays. They brought along 3 locomotives, all 5" gauge, as follows: 'B1', '9F' & a freelance SECR tank engine. Wednesday 31st was a dry, warm and most sunny day, and once on the track our guests enjoyed some uninterrupted running during the late morning before the passenger hauling commenced at 14:00. In addition, our junior members also benefitted from some practise driving steam as they got the chance to have a go on the visiting locomotives. This takes me back to years past when as a youngster you would do anything to get on a visiting locomotive, which at that age seemed like a real coup! There was a minor setback just after lunch when one of the gauge glasses cracked on Eddie's '9F'! Fortunately we had sufficient spare blue lined glass in the stores and no more than half an hour after what seemed like despair and the locomotive was back in steam and ready for the afternoon! It was not particularly busy as track days go but it was very pleasant nonetheless and nice to see some different locomotives on the track – all steam! Thanks through these pages to everyone who helped out during the day, including Mike P for TC, Linda as SM and to all the lads for assisting where necessary. Also to the Focus group for maintaining our passenger service (pictures from their visit in July appear below and next page).



Picture above: Eddie with his '9F' starts the steady climb towards signal 2



Picture above: Junior member Edward exits the short tunnel with the 'B1'

Andrew B

No Goes

A couple of other diary items pencilled in for August had to be cancelled due to poor weather. A Petanque Match + BBQ planned for Thursday 1st and then rearranged for Wednesday 14th were both called off due to bad weather. In addition, the proposed Double Heading / £3 day on Saturday 10th August was also postponed for the same reason. Hopefully we shall have better luck in the coming days / weeks with our remaining visits / special events...

Andrew B

End of Summer BBQ

As reported earlier in this edition, our second BBQ of the summer took place on Saturday 24th August, during one of the hottest Bank Holiday weekends in recent times. Reduced in numbers due to holiday and other commitments a very pleasant evening was reportedly had by all with 3 trains operating during the evening. Thanks through these pages to all those who attended the BBQ and of course to Val & John for the preparation of the food / puddings etc... We have been lucky during 2019 in that both of our BBQ's have been dry and very pleasant evenings. Hopefully during 2020 we shall be equally fortunate..., (pictures courtesy of Sam R appear on the next two pages).

Andrew B



Picture above: Dan driving 'Conway' on the downhill past the steaming bays



Picture above: Fraser driving the 'yellow loco' alongside the Bowling Green



Picture above: Sam H with the London Transport Tram on the main siding



Picture above: Geoff and a fish slice, oh and quite a few frying onions too

Two Terriers

In this edition I was keen to publish a picture of Bob Youldon's 5" 'Terrier' locomotive and thanks to Steve T trawling the archives I have been able to do just that (**see picture below**). Some of our older members will remember this locomotive running at Beech Hurst, whilst for many of us newer ones, pictures will have to suffice. I would loved to have seen the Westinghouse Pump in action (seen adjacent to the cab in the picture below) and Bob talked about the trials and tribulations of trying to get such a delicate component to work. A few years ago he kindly shared some sketches and detailed text with me, and hopefully one day I shall have a go at making one for myself – thanks for the top tips Bob!

In addition to Bob's, I thought it would be nice to share a couple of pictures of a visiting 'Terrier' we had on static display during the Beaver's evening back in July. This fine example, named 'Minorities', belongs to a friend and we were very privileged to have her visit (**see both pictures next page and thanks to Chris S for the close up cab view**). The locomotive is brush painted, including the lettering and lining, and she is absolutely superb, almost too good to run! For the Beaver's visit she was perfect because many of the children can relate the locomotive to 'Fenchurch' or 'Stepney', which are both based at the Bluebell Railway. Chris was also able to explain the difference between the larger freight and passenger locomotives (we used the 'Black 5' and 'King Arthur') and those smaller ones used for lighter duties, such as 'Terriers'. I think it is safe to say the children were suitably impressed!



Picture above: Bob's 'Terrier' at Beech Hurst with the old light blue trucks



Picture above: 'Minories' pictured on the steaming bay turntable at Beech Hurst



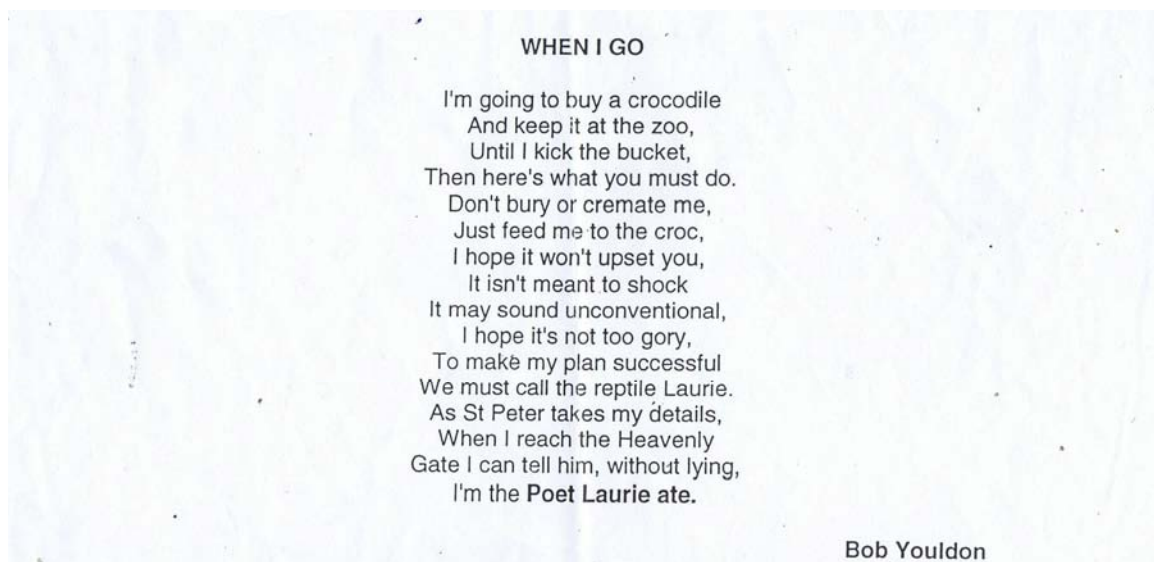
Picture above: A close up cab view of 'Minories', including the hand written lettering of the regular driver of the full size locomotive. Note the position of the gauge to the right and out of shot is the proper shaped fire hole door!

Andrew B

Bob Youldon

Those of you who remember Bob will recall not only his modelling activities but also his many amusing anecdotes. Should we find ourselves confined to the clubhouse by wet weather, and if Bob was present, he would keep us amused by producing numerous comic cartoons and poems covering recent club related events. One afternoon, shortly after we had attended a late member's funeral, Bob produced a poem which I thought would be a suitable epitaph for myself and which I stowed carefully away, not expecting I would be the survivor of the two of us!

So, with Christine's permission I reproduce it herewith in memory of Bob's sense of humour:



Here's hoping it worked for you Bob!

Ray

Work in Progress

With this edition coming in at a round 14 pages, Work in Progress will take a break for this issue but will return again in October...

Andrew B

Forthcoming & Diary of Events

Since the June edition, Andrew S has now finalised the date for a visit from Polegate club. This had been in abeyance while they arranged which day was best at their end and finally the date of Saturday 14th was agreed. This coming weekend is looking good, so hopefully they will enjoy a pleasant day with us and like the Crowborough visit earlier this week, I shall report on both next time.

On our last Saturday of the season, we will run additional hours from 14:00 until 20:00, a.k.a our 'Dusk Run'. If we get an evening similar to 2018 then we will hopefully do very well and it was great fun for ourselves and for the passengers.

Moved from our previously held Bonfire / Firework Night (now cancelled for 2019) Val will be providing food for those helping out during the Saturday. Baked potatoes, beans and cheese will be served during two sittings, one planned to be between 17:00 – 17:30 and the other between 19:30 – 20:00. This way all volunteers, either working an early turn / a late turn, or both, can be catered for. A list is on the whiteboard in the clubhouse, so please add your name to the list if you would like to be fed. Fingers crossed that we are blessed with a dry evening. Names are still required for our 'Christmas Lights Event' in December. A list is also on the whiteboard in the clubhouse and do add your name for the day(s) you can commit to in the duty(duties) you are able to cover. It is necessary to make sure all turns are covered and in addition there is likely to be a call for volunteers to help set up / tidy up during the weekends prior to this, so please keep an eye on the next newsletter for details of these dates.

Looking into 2020 and our New Year's Day Fun Run + Lunch have now been pencilled in. A list will be on the whiteboard later in the year, so if you would like to attend and be duly fed + watered then please keep an eye out nearer the time. Finally for now, we have agreed to exhibit once again at the Alexandra Palace LMEE in January 2020. Adam has proposed a display of BR Standard locomotives, classes 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8 & 9, if he can get permission for one of each. These permissions are currently being sought and the idea is to have them in a circle or part-circle around a turntable. If this idea comes to fruition then we will not be seeking actual exhibits for next year but we will be asking for as much help as possible to prepare the display beforehand and then to set up and breakdown at the exhibition venue. More details to follow in the October news...

I shall keep the Diary updated in the next edition, together with reports & pictures from the majority of the items listed below.

14th September 2019 – Polegate to visit SMLS – Will start from 10:00

28th September 2019 – Afternoon / 'Dusk Run' + Food – From 14:00 to 20:00

13th – 16th December 2019 – Christmas Lights Event – See details above

1st January 2020 – New Year's Day Fun Run + Lunch – Will start from 10:00

16th – 19th January 2020 – SMLS to exhibit at Alexandra Palace – See above

NB. Certain events may be organised at short notice and will not therefore appear in the newsletter. Please check white / notice boards in the clubhouse for details of such events.

Andrew B