

LIONSHEART

Number 35

NOVEMBER 1994

A TRIBUTE

Welcome to a new edition of LIONSHEART. Before I get on with the main business may I first pay tribute to the very considerable efforts put into producing this publication over the past five years by my predecessors, Jan Ford, Secretary and Peter Servis, Editor.

Even in these early days I am beginning to realise the considerable workload which goes into the production of this newsletter, small as it is and with only a limited circulation. I am sure I speak (or write?) for all OLCO members when I say thanks for all they have done. I have enjoyed receiving LIONSHEART and reading its interesting contents by various authors in days gone by. Without the work put in by Jan and Peter such articles may not have passed beyond their authors' pens and been assembled and distributed to us, the interested membership. I trust that with the continued help of everyone I can carry on the good work, though if I do only half as well, then I shall have achieved something.

John Hawley - Editor

LIONSMEET '94

Now, without further ado, lets get on with the business of reporting the news. Firstly, Peter Gardener's article on the latest LIONSMEET at Frimley, in Surrey. Peter is the OLCO Modellers' Representative and as such is responsible among other things for arranging venues for this annual event...

This year's LIONSMEET was held at the ground-level track of the Frimley Lodge Miniature Railway with the Frimley and Ascot Locomotive Club as host. I am the Chief Engineer at Frimley and also, since the Olco AGM, the model representative on our committee and the rest of the committee present rather ganged up on me to write this report on LIONSMEET.

I don't know whether members were perhaps put off by the prospect of a ground level track but numbers were well down on last year with only three LIONS in steam. In addition, Geoff Wright's 7 1/4" LION was complete and on display having missed being in steam by only a few cc s of midnight oil. It looks magnificent and he has promised to come and double head (with my LION) at Frimley when it is steamworthy. Also in the display tent was another partly built 7 1/4" LION by Paul White from Reading, an "Invicta" in 3 1/2" G by person unknown and my partly built 7 1/4" G "LIVERPOOL", the first Bury coppernob. My wife overheard some comments on the tender for my coppernob to the effect that the tender is rather wide. Information on tenders is tantalisingly sparse and mine is based on an illustration of a Bury engine of the London and Birmingham Railway at the engine house at Crimden. This is a much reproduced contemporary print by J C Bourne and looks much more accurate than most artists' renderings. It clearly shows axle boxes and horns outside the wheels, tender frames outside the horns and the tender tank being wider than the frames and with a substantial flare above the water space. I have made the tank flush

with the frames to minimise the width but when reasonable 7 1/4" G wheel standards, working axle boxes and springs are used the width of the tender is what you get.

The weather on the day was perfect and with a 3000 ft track to ourselves the running was free and easy. Locomotives in steam were David Neish's and Mike Parrot's in 5" G and mine in 7 1/4". I elected to take fare paying passengers throughout the day. An advantage of ground level point-work is that the passenger platform could be kept separate from the other trains.

Mike and David had no trouble adapting to driving on ground level and we had a number of driving trucks spare and suitable for 5" and 3 1/2" G. Coal was rather more of a problem as our club member responsible for obtaining some small coal forgot to do so.

My own coal which I supplied in lieu looked alright but seemed to be made of some incombustible material.

The usual competition was held to find the LION performing the most work over a 10 minute period. Mike Parrot had brought along a dynamometer car and adapted it for ground level and for coupling to 7 1/4" G. All three LIONS performed and I now have to find an excuse to explain why Mike's 5" LION did more work than my 7 1/4" LION !

The results were :

Mike Parrott - 55304 ft lb

Peter Gardner- 54355 ft lb

David Neish - 41245 ft lb

David did not have a very good run as he stalled at the incline into our arrival platform and took a little while to recover from this. Mike made a most spirited run; my daughter and son-in-law were passengers/observers and described it as a white knuckle ride. Mike covered a distance of about 8000ft in his 10 minutes which gives an average speed of just over 10 mph. This is as fast as any run ever recorded on this track.

I hauled a total of 10 passengers including the driver and covered only 5000 ft at a sedate average speed of 5.7 mph. This was largely on the grounds of safety when using fairly high passenger cars and carrying members of the public. The only accident that we have experienced on the railway was due to excessive speed during a locomotive efficiency competition and this has made us very speed conscious.

A problem encountered with a 7 1/4" LION is the reach over the tender. I normally solve this by the use of foot-rests on the tender and this works very well. However, this cannot be done when using a dynamometer car as one has to avoid any contact with the tender in order not to add spurious forces. Consequently, it was very difficult to reach the controls during the trial.

Eric Lindsay, the original builder of my LION, attended the meet and so was able to see the results of my ownership and the modifications I have made. The most significant of these was the change of the regulator from a disk in a tube to screw-down. On two occasions I had the disk regulator fail to seal when in steam and with gab gear this is, of course, a serious problem.

Next year's LIONSMEET should be at a more northerly venue having had two meets in succession in the south. Preliminary agreement has been made with the Sutton Coldfield Club whose track at Belleny Green offers the advantage of both raised and ground level track catering for 2.5, 3.5 & 5 and 5 & 7.25 inch gauges respectively. This way all preferences can be catered for. The site is private and has ideal facilities for a LIONSMEET being sheltered with a good club-house and a covered area of steaming bays (ex petrol station forecourt) making an ideal display area for static models.

We also have potential venues for 1996 and 1997 of Bristol and Peterborough.

Peter Gardner

Editor's Lament...

I do not yet possess a model of LION, (though I have some bits and a strong desire to get on with them). Thus I could only ride the track at Frimley behind David Neish's 5" model, driven by his son Andrew as the last movement of the day. It is indeed a splendid location, weaving in and out of the trees beside the Basingstoke canal. The colour light signalling is a first class example of what can be done. Thanks Andrew, for an interesting ride. Perhaps one day, I can return the favour.

Progress on LION

As reported in LIONSHEART No. 33, LION's return to steamable condition has been cancelled. Instead she will be prepared for display purposes only at the works of Dorothea Restorations in Whaley Bridge, near Manchester.

One of the major tasks to be performed during this very limited restoration is the re-alignment of the crank axle within its four bearings (two each in the inner and outer frames). It appears that during investigations as to what work required to be done to the locomotive, the boiler was lifted from the outer sandwich frame, which promptly distorted.

The correct alignment of all four bearings is vital to the integrity of the wrought iron axle. Since there is no record of how this was achieved when LION was young, the whole procedure has had to be re-invented. To this end, E F Clark (former OLCO Chairman and current President of the Newcomen Society), at the invitation of National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, visited Dorothea in early August and has subsequently written a comprehensive recommended procedure to be followed in order that the re-alignment be achieved.

The procedure involves the reassembly of LION's valve gear and motion to the point at which the driving wheels (mounted on rollers) may be rotated by low pressure compressed air. However, since there is no chance of her returning to steam in the foreseeable future, that is probably as close to working condition that she is likely to get at this stage in her long life. It is probable that the rest of the work will be merely an assembling together of the currently dismantled parts, a lick of paint and that's about it! The boiler will be protected with an in-organic wax coating, but will remain tubeless. The rotted portion of the outer frame may remain unrepaired.

The decision by the museum to protect the boiler with a coating seems a little controversial, with some authorities feeling quite strongly that nothing more than good atmospheric control be maintained. However, the Museum states that the coating will provide added protection in the event of unforeseen changes in PH levels. The coating will be relatively easy to remove if there is a decision in the future to return LION to steam.

I visited Dorothea myself on 17 August to continue the task of measuring as fully as possible each and every part for record purposes. At that time the slide valves and their covers were assembled, as was the valve gear support bracket(very often referred to as the inverted gallows) on the aft face of the smokebox tubeplate. I will keep you informed of progress as far as I am able.

Latest News

Following a conversation I had with John Kearon, of National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside(LION's owners) on 22 November, I am pleased to report that LION has been substantially restored to display condition. Badly corroded areas of the smokebox have been cleaned back to bare metal and given a protective coating. The rear panel of the tender, which was badly pitted and quite porous in places, has been sealed and painted. The rotted section of the wooden 'meat' in the sandwich of steel flitch plates of the locomotive outer frame has been replaced and the plates themselves in that area (seriously reduced by corrosion), have been thoroughly cleaned and protected against further wastage.

The procedure written by E F Clark for the re-alignment of the crank axle will be followed with some amendments, but will, as recommended, involve a 'rolling road' and movement under the influence of low pressure air(bearing in mind that LION's working steam pressure is only 50 lbf/in).

Generally, all areas of bare metalwork, including the boiler have been thoroughly cleaned and coated with a protective wax compound. Flaked paintwork has been removed and touched up. At the moment of writing the wooden cladding has not been replaced, but it will soon be re-assembled and varnished. It is hoped that LION will be returned to Liverpool early in the New Year. More in the next issue of LIONSHEART.

The Future of LIONSHEART

At an OLCO committee meeting on 1st October it was decided that the lack of public appearances of LION in steam for the foreseeable future would probably mean a reduction in reporting activity in LIONSHEART. It has therefore been proposed that this publication be scaled down to a mere single sheet, containing brief news items and announcements. However, I will try to ensure that it is no more "occasional" than it is now.

The real news is that LIONSHEART will be complemented by a yearly quality publication, covering technical and historical aspects of LION, including photographs. The editor will be Charles Taylor-Nobbs. I can reveal that in the first issue, planned for early 1995, the boiler will be the main topic. More than that I will not say. Look out for it!

As for LIONSHEART and its size and contents, this issue has certainly filled more than one sheet. However, its your paper. What goes in it is what you want to see. I am prepared to publish whatever articles or correspondence you send in (within the bounds of respectability and relevance, of course). So, please let me hear your views:

- of the decision to mothball LION (you can let off steam, even if she can't);

- of modelling (which may be our main activity for some time to come. Many of you must have complete or partly completed models. See below..)

- of your memories or knowledge of LION and her associations (you may supply some vital history), etc., etc.

Modelling

One activity in which we can expect to see an increase is that of modelling LION. There must be many in existence, probably mainly to LBSC's "Words and Music". I would like to hear of them - Do you have one? What gauge, what design, is it in regular use, will you bring it to the next LIONSMEET? Is it part finished? Do you need help to finish it in way of advice, drawings, etc? Do you know of someone with a LION? Perhaps they could be invited to join OLCO with all its news items and fund of knowledge. They could also help to swell the numbers attending LIONSMEET'95. Please drop me a line.

AGM - 1995

It is hoped that the AGM will be held in May'95, possibly at Leeds. More in the next issue.

LIONSMEET '95

The next meeting of model LIONS in competitive mode will be at the 1995 LIONSMEET at the track of Sutton Coldfield MES on Sunday, 13 August. This is a fairly central location which should suit most of you who would like to attend such an event. It is hoped that this will encourage some of our more Northerly members to attend. More details in the next issue of LIONSHEART.

Attention all 7 1/4" LIONS

The 1995 Summer meeting of the Newcomen Society is to be held at the Gorse Blossom Railway, near Newton Abbot in Devon from 17 to 21 July. The track is at ground level and is to the single gauge of 7 1/4". We already have two LIONS willing to take their owners along. Any more offers? OLCO members will be welcome as visitors throughout the week. See you there?

In spite of the proposal to reduce the size of LIONSHEART, I shall be pleased to receive any letters, news items, etc. which you would like to have published in LIONSHEART. See below.

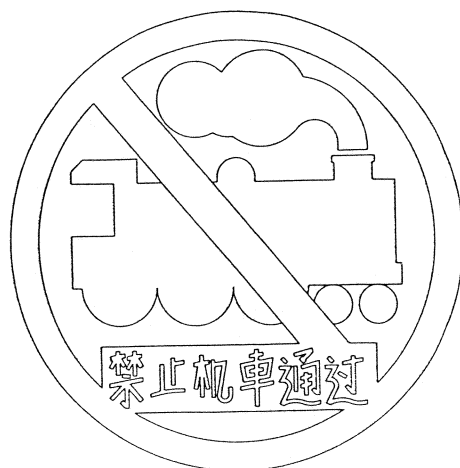
LIONSHEART is published by The Old Locomotive Committee.

Address for correspondence:

Mr J P Hawley,
Secretary - OLCO,
Rock House,
Downside,
Backwell,
Bristol,
BS19 3DH.

Tel: 01275 472023.

Finally, may I wish you all a Peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year.
I look forward to meeting you at the AGM, the Gorse Blossom Railway,
at LIONSMEET or perhaps all three.



Tailpiece... No prizes!