



CHELTENHAM SOCIETY OF MODEL ENGINEERS

# NEWSLETTER

April 2025

[www.cheltsme.org.uk](http://www.cheltsme.org.uk)

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## HAIL SIR GEORGE DOWTY!



Following the extracts from Model Engineer of October 1958 in the March 2025 Newsletter, what should arrive in my inbox but a picture of our benefactor Sir George Dowty riding a CSME train? *writes Alan Drewett*

The year was 1960 and Sir George in his pale coat was surrounded by eager well wishers as a model of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway locomotive 'Lion' let off steam. This was only seven years after the real 'Lion' starred in the Ealing comedy 'The Titfield

Thunderbolt'. Do any readers remember that model engine, or indeed anyone in the photograph? The young boy on the right holding a model boat would be drawing his pension by now!

I was sent the picture because a book edited by Sir George Dowty's last secretary will shortly be available containing summaries of the diaries he kept covering the years 1919 until his passing in 1975.

This book is to be formally launched at the Worcestershire County Cricket Club Graeme Hick Pavilion on the morning of 9 June 2025.

It is hoped that Lord Heseltine will chair the event. If you would like to reserve a copy of the book and attend the book launch, please contact [martinrobins@btinternet.com](mailto:martinrobins@btinternet.com)





# FORTHCOMING EVENTS

## CHELTENHAM MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITION

[www.cheltmodrail.org.uk](http://www.cheltmodrail.org.uk)

Sponsored by

**JAMES HOPKINS COACHES**

Steam & diesel layouts  
Model road vehicles  
Trade stands  
Refreshments



Thomas will be there for children to drive

**Saturday 5th April 2025 10am to 5pm**

**Sunday 6th April 2025 10am to 4.30pm**

St Margaret's Hall, Coniston Road, Hatherley, GL51 3NU  
Adults £6.00, Children, £2.00, Family £12.00 - Cash Only



organised by  
Cheltenham GWR  
Modellers Group

Donation to



PROUDLY PRESENTS

84



84TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF THE JET AGE

**SATURDAY 26 APRIL 2025**

WHITTLE - THE JET PIONEER (65 MINS)  
SCREENED AT 1030 AND 1445  
AN AUDIENCE WITH IAN WHITTLE  
30 MINUTES OF TALK AND Q & A  
1145 AND 1400  
NO BOOKING NECESSARY

Meteor Business Park, Cheltenham Road East,  
Gloucester GL2 9QL. Tel 01452 260078

Every year Jet Age Museum commemorates the anniversary of the birth of the Jet Age celebrating the genius of Sir Frank Whittle whose pioneering work on the jet engine led to the first flight of the Gloster E28/39 aircraft which left the ground at Brockworth, near Gloucester, during taxi trials in April 1941 - and the world of air travel we know today. This year all are welcome to visit the Museum to see the film: Whittle - The Jet Pioneer and to meet our Patron, Ian Whittle, a retired RAF and commercial airline pilot and son of Sir Frank Whittle.



## HORNBY RUNNING DAY

Saturday 12 April 2025 1100 - 1600

at Slimbridge Village Hall GL2 7BJ

Come and see vintage Hornby and other trains in Gauge O, electric and clockwork Dublo 2 rail and 3 rail. Admission free, please park at rear of hall.



ADDITIONAL

OPEN DAY

16 APRIL 2025

10.00 TO 16.00



## CHELTENHAM SOCIETY OF MODEL ENGINEERS

### PUBLIC RUNNING DAYS 2025

Sunday 27 April

Sunday 18 May

Sunday 8 June

Wednesday 13 August

Sunday 7 September

Sunday 5 October

## HEREFORD SOCIETY OF MODEL ENGINEERS Ltd.

AT BROOMY HILL RAILWAY HEREFORD HR4 0LJ

### SUMMER STEAM-UP THE 7 1/4 GAUGE SOCIETY MINI MEETING AND THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF HSME

**1st 2nd & 3rd of July 2022**

*This Summer weekend rally is an open invitation to all clubs to join in the fun.*

**Bring along a model and use the club's many facilities:**

A 1 Mile run on ground level track of 7 1/4 and 5 inch gauges,  
An elevated track of 5 and 3 1/2 inch gauges,  
A Gauge 1 garden railway,  
A 00 indoor layout  
And a boating pond.



Bring your model Boats, Tanks, Tractor engines, Hot rods, Vintage Vehicles, Traction and Stationary engines.

**Caravan Parking. No hook-up or waste disposal  
Tea and light refreshment available**

Contact: Wally Sykes 01981 458306  
wallyg0rij@gmail.com

Contact for boats; Brian Kempson 01432 356197

# THE WHEELS OF INDUSTRY



Just after this delightful orange Bo-Bo was seen at the CSME Member's Running Day of 16 March 2025, a picture appeared on Facebook of the diesel hydraulic 'Cracoe' at Swinden quarry near Skipton. Although similar in format, the white 12 wheeler weighs 140 tons!





# COLLECTOR'S EVENING by Tony Richards

I was not sure how successful the idea of a collectors' evening would be so was very pleased to see, as it approached 7pm, that the tables in the Clubhouse were slowly being covered with a great variety of objects.

18 members were in attendance to enjoy an interesting and informative evening. Each "collector", in turn, said a few words about the items they had brought then after a cuppa it was a general chat where members could find out more about the object brought along.

Space prevents a detailed report on all the items but here is a flavour,

To start off the evening I displayed a selection of cameras including Brownie 127s and 1936 Leica.

Bill K. followed with a recently acquired copy of the history of H H Martyns.

Three members had brought Hornby products - Andrew H. with a set of "Mechanics Made Easy" (manufactured between 1902 & 1908 and the forerunner of Meccano), Tim V. had a selection of the MO range of trains (top picture) and Andrew S. had several of the latest sets of OO gauge railways.

Alan D. provided a display case of 1/72 scale aircraft which had been gifted to the Jet Age Museum.



Steve F. followed with a selection of aero engines which he had collected and restored over time.

Next there was a Dinky horse box, clockwork bus and Mimic van all owned by Chris H since childhood.

New member Yan W. demonstrated a mechanical calculator made in Switzerland.

Mike H. had brought an unusual Sine Bar and Graham G. showed a selection of souvenir mugs.

Pete E. provided a railway theme with a loco lamp and a brass makers plate (second picture).

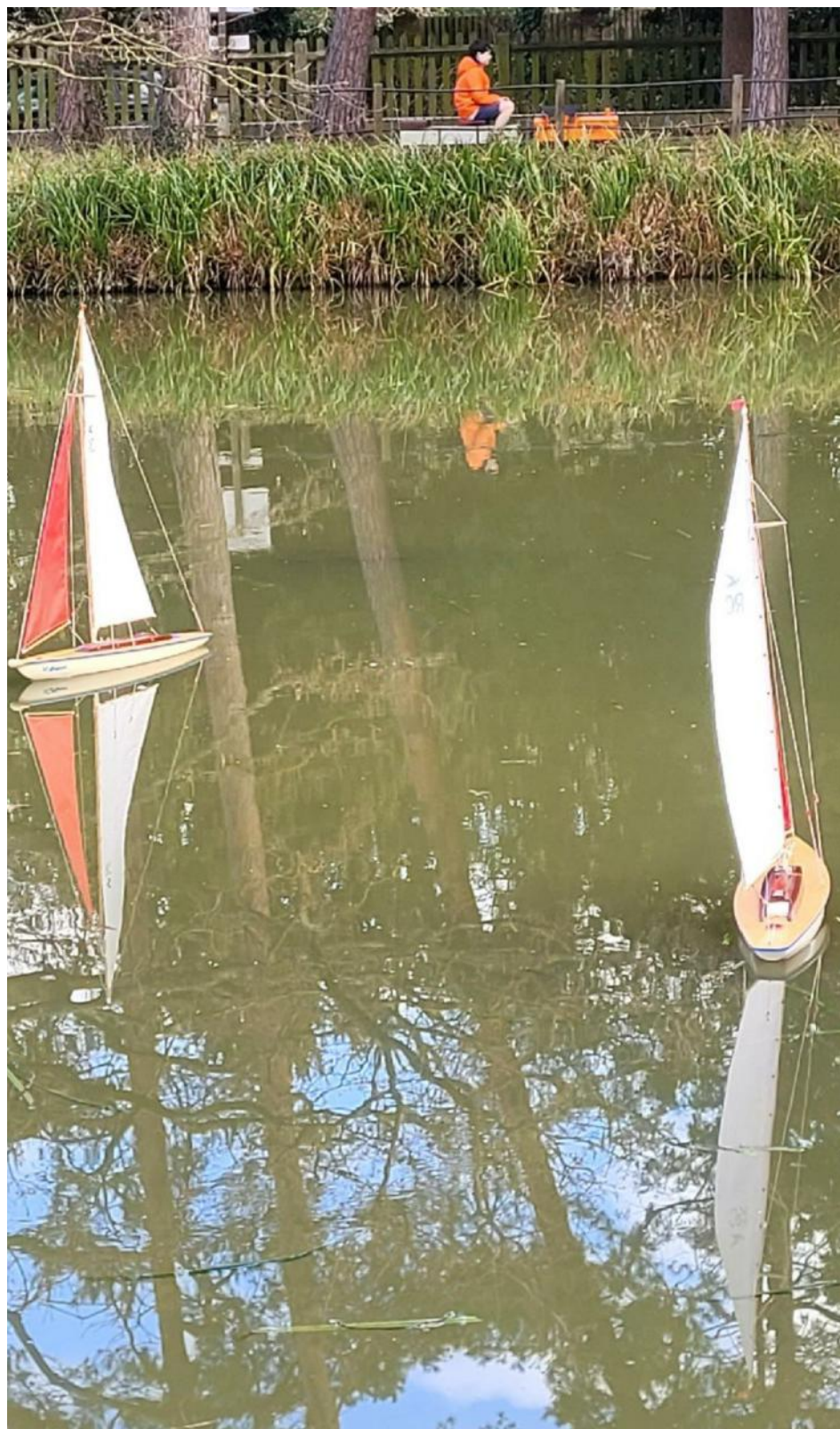
John K. has a selection of replica items used by pilots in WWII to conceal compasses etc. (third picture)

For me the two highlights of the evening. One was Chris H's clockwork bus manufactured by Brimtoy which automatically stopped every so often as though it was picking up passengers, the bell rang and the bus re-started.

The second item was a tin box owned by John K, about the size of a shoe box with glass windows and a gas canister on top – this turned out to be used by miners to resuscitate canaries when they had suffered from exposure to gas (pictured left).



# REFLECTIONS ON MEMBERS RUNNING DAY



Sunday 16 March 2025 yielded the sight of a yacht race on the lake framing a passing train, echoing the CSME badge itself.

Among the other motive power was 56171 (above) wearing the early British Railways 'Lion on a Bike' logo on its side tanks. The real Caledonian Railway six wheeled Dock Shunters were introduced in 1912.

The Garden Railway meanwhile was graced by a train of Mitropa dining and sleeping cars headed by Wurtemerg's Prussian T18 Class 4-6-4T 1127 while the Anchor Handling and Supply Vessel Arif was based even further east in the United Arab Emirates



**Do you have a story for the May edition of CSME Newsletter? Please email by Monday 14 April 2025 at [alandrewettcityoftruro2000@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:alandrewettcityoftruro2000@yahoo.co.uk)**



## GROUND AND BUILDING MAINTENANCE by Tony Richards

In preparation for the grass cutting season the mowers have been serviced by Anthony Siddles. This has included an oil change, air filter cleaning and the replacement of one badly chipped and bent blade.

Boats have at times become entangled in overhanging reeds and brambles so John Richards has started cutting these back. Tim Vale has been out in the boat, helped by Barry Morgan & Gordon Drew, he managed to recover various debris plus a large branch and a road cone.

Barry Morgan, John Rothwell, Chris Leach and Chris Jones have continued to remove fallen branches, twigs etc. and generally tidy the grassed areas.



Severn Valley Railway created an e...  
Kidderminster Town Station, DY10 1QR ...



Sat, 12 Apr at 08:45

### The Fifty Fundraiser

Join us for a day of diesel thrash behind Class 50 50049, travelling over 100 miles in one day! We have partnered with The Class 50 Alliance for this special one-off running day which is in support of the SVR ...

Mitropa was a catering company best known for having managed sleeping and dining cars of different German railways for most of the 20th century. Founded in 1916, the name "Mitropa" is an abbreviation of Mitteleuropa (German for Central Europe). The railway carriages displayed a distinct burgundy-red livery with the Mitropa logo and were an alternative to the 'enemy'-owned Compagnie Internationale des Wagons-Lits (CIWL). including the Balkans Express from Berlin to Constantinople, introduced to replace the Orient Express.

## SUMMER EVENING MEETINGS ON THE FIRST

Commencing in May, from about 7.00p m we shall be holding informal evening meetings which, by taking advantage of our lovely ground & the longer daylight hours, will allow members & family to operate their boats & locos. Alternatively, just pop down for a relaxing chat & cuppa.



## MEET THE NEW SOCIETY LOCOMOTIVE!





# THE FIFTY FIFTIES



CSME Running Day on Sunday 16 March 2025 yielded an echo of Western Region motive power spread over 40 years. The real 6807 Birchwood Grange was built by the Great

Western Railway at Swindon and allocated new to Worcester shed in September 1936 . It was still there for withdrawal in December 1963, just 11 years before the first Class 50s arrived on Western

Region to replace the Class 52 Western C-C diesel hydraulics which were being withdrawn as non standard.

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## LANCASTER CRASH AT SIDDINGTON



Thanks to the Siddington News website, the young crew of a WWII Lancaster bomber were remembered on the 80th anniversary of their fatal crash just outside Siddington, between Cirencester and South Cerney, near the route of the Midland and South Western Junction Railway.

On Saturday, 10 February, 1945, just three months before the end of World War II in Europe.

Nineteen year old RAF Sergeant Gordon Mackenzie and his Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) crew, four from Ontario and two from New Brunswick, were training aboard an Avro Lancaster Mk I.

Their navigation exercise on that day was a cross-country flight with a practice bombing run over Caen in France, liberated by the Allies less than a year earlier. Their Lancaster, ME750 coded Q-YT of 1666 Heavy Conversion Unit left RAF Wombleton in North Yorkshire shortly before 11 am.

The flight to France passed without incident and along their route back over south-west England a huge cumulonimbus cloud of snow, ice and lightning engulfed the Lancaster in the skies above Cirencester.

Eye witnesses saw ME750, falling out of the cloud base just two thousand feet above the ground, on fire and in a vertical dive, breaking up shortly before impact.

The wreckage was spread over a mile and more. All seven of the crewmen were dead. Kilmarnock, the home of his parents, became the last resting place for Gordon Mackenzie while the Canadians were buried in Brookwood Cemetery, Surrey.

We salute their sacrifice.

## THE FIFTY 50S



Prior to West Coast Main Line electrification north of Crewe, British Rail was unsure whether its existing 2 580 bhp Brush Class 47 diesel electrics would be reliable enough to work expresses to Glasgow and so fifty 2 700 horsepower English Electric Class 50 locomotives – numbered from 400 to 449 – were ordered and built in 1967 and 1968.

Like the Brush Class 47s but unlike English Electric's earlier Class 40s, the Class 50s had a flat front with a two piece windscreen.

The 100 mph Class 50s were based around a single well-proven 16 cylinder engine, although British Rail also insisted that they be fitted with a clean air electrical compartment, which was responsible for the "hoover" noise from which the Class 50s were nicknamed.

When the northern WCML from Crewe to Glasgow was electrified in 1974, the Class 50 fleet – now numbered 50 001 to 50 050 – moved to

Western Region to replace Class 52 "Western" diesel hydraulics on mainline passenger services west of Paddington and between Birmingham New Street and Bristol Temple Meads.

Following the earlier withdrawal of the Class 41, 42 and 43 diesel hydraulic "Warships", BR decided to continue this naming policy on the Class 50s from 1977.

However, while avoiding names that could be confused with existing Class 47 and 87 locomotives and also with Royal or Imperial connections, the Class 50s were to be named in the most part with the names of Warships from the two World Wars.

In 1984 though, the forthcoming 150th anniversary of the opening of the Great Western Railway saw 50 007 'Hercules' renamed 'Sir Edward Elgar' and given a Brunswick green livery that it was to keep until 2014.

# CHAIRMAN'S WAFFLE

Welcome to March's edition of the waffle. There has been lots going on in the club this month and you might have heard by now that we have a new locomotive from Abbots Engineering, a 2 hp Neptune 4 battery electric loco with sound. [See Page 5 - Ed]

We are now sourcing some batteries for this loco and are looking at 2 x 85 Ah lead acid.

Whilst this would be the preferred choice the cost difference is quite a lot, and we have found using the 08 that lead acid just about covers us for our PRDs and the length of service the batteries give is also satisfactory.

We should be getting the driving car at some point in April although these must be built from scratch, so it will take longer for this to arrive.

We must look after this locomotive as we do the 08. I must remind members to treat the locos the club has as if it were their own. Any misuse of the locomotives in the club will be clamped down on. I know you all care though, so hopefully that won't be an issue.

I look forward to seeing the new loco in action pulling our first set of members/passengers and then beyond this earning its keep in making monies for the club. Members who wish to drive the loco must be shown the basics of the loco to drive it and follow the guidelines for getting it ready and returning it after use. Thank you to those members who donated to this project.

We should be using the Clubhouse kitchen and have moved out of the old canteen by the time that you read this. If not, we are very close to doing so.

Please keep the clubhouse clean and tidy. There will be some guidelines coming out shortly on what we expect each gang (Wednesday, Tuesday, Sunday etc) to do. This is a facility for the whole of the club and the whole club has to take responsibility to look after it. There will be some tweaks needed over the coming weeks but essentially use your common sense. **DO NOT GO IN THERE WITH MUDDY BOOTS ON**, take them off on the verandah (side when built). I also want members to use the dishwasher for washing the clubs' mugs, not the sink, no matter if its only two mugs.

Dishwasher instructions will be available. Filling the dishwasher with dirty mugs will save us power and water and will be more hygienic. It makes it easier for you as well to just put in the dishwasher or take out. That way we don't have drying mugs or dirty mugs hanging about and the surfaces are kept clear and tidy.

There will be no more memorabilia items placed in the clubhouse unless authorised by the Committee, or else we risk becoming over run like the Committee Suite. We want members to use the clubhouse now so space for members to sit and relax is most important.

The first aid station will be moved over to the clubhouse very shortly as well.

For hand washing please use the gents' toilets for now, not the kitchen sink in the Clubhouse.

We are hoping to have the Belfast sink in situ by the toilets in the coming months, once the old canteen has been decommissioned. This will be where washing of the engineering type of hands must be done.

I'm beginning to sound like a parent now, but you get the idea – we need to look after our Clubhouse and keep it looking and feeling clean. More guidelines will be left in the kitchen, and I'll email them out as well once written.

So by the time you read this the committee suite clear out will have taken place and the Day of Action will be upon us on the Friday 4 April. We have lots to do on the day so again I please ask you to make yourselves available and let John Kidger know when you get to the ground on Friday, so he can allocate you a job in a gang. We are starting slightly earlier this year at 0930 so we get a good run up until fish and chips lunch about 1300. The afternoon will finish at 1600,. Please stay the whole day if you can, it will make a difference. Then as we finish off the day we start to think about the first PRD at the end of April. We do need a good year for PRDs which gives us a healthy bank balance and allows us to take on big jobs to update and change the site where it is needed. The public hold us with great love, and it is remarkable each year the kind messages I hear even just off the cuff remarks as they are entering or leaving the ground. Let's make sure we capitalise on this good feeling and give them a good experience this year. That's it from me for now – see you at the ground!