



West Wiltshire Society of Model Engineers Newsletter

Issue No.41 January/February 2026



Calendar

January

- 3rd – Saturday Steam Up. 10am-4pm.
- 17th – Saturday Steam Up. 10am-4pm.
- 17th – Club Auction Day. 2pm.

February

- 7th – Saturday Steam Up. 10am-4pm.
- 21st – Saturday Steam Up. 10am-4pm.

Check the club WhatsApp group for additional days when members are running.

Do you have any articles or pictures for the next newsletter? If you can help, please send to:
secretary@wwsme.org.uk

News

Track Talk

By Tony Lowe



(Pic 1) members enjoying the presentation

Saturday 29th November saw twenty members attend our first winter Saturday talk presented by Peter Pearson and our Chairman Jon Clarke. The theme was Track. Something that most of us rely on when we run our models. It's interesting stuff track, especially when you learn about what can and sometimes does go wrong in the full-size world and in miniature.



(Pic 2) Jon in presentation mode

Jon's expertise on the full-size railway and Peter skills of how he built his own 5" gauge garden railway showed that so many issues are relative in the full-size world and also in the model engineering world, but the problems can be bigger the smaller the gauge you go.

As many of us are aware our own White Horse Miniature Railway does have some issues with track movement. This is improving and on Monday and Wednesday mornings the maintenance teams are regularly found working and improving both the Ground and Raised tracks for us all to enjoy, but the talk highlighted some of these issues such as how track cantor can cause derailments. Did you know our curves are set for an operational speed of 4mph? In the real world

that equates to around +60mph, yes, we do not have 4mph signs on every corner but now that this has been highlighted, please bear this in mind when running. We do have a 6mph speed signs on straights and 3mph speed limits through points and station areas. We appreciated that most people don't have speedometer, so 6mph is a fast walking / slow jogging pace and 3mph is a steady walking pace. After a wonderful two hours of presentation some discussion followed at the end of the talk, and there was agreement that with some additional maintenance groups the track will improve even more.



(Pic 3 & 4) Ground level ballast retaining block work, carried out by Bryon and Mike

APPEAL If any members have any driveway blocks or solid house bricks laying around at home and would like to donate these to the club, the club would be very welcome of any donations and would be used for track edging among other uses. If you cannot bring these to the club please contact myself, Tony Lowe, (an email or give me a call) and I can arrange to see if we can collect from your home.

In the near future a track maintenance training session is going to be arranged which will be open to all members, so keep an eye out for the email. The session will be for learning a bit more about track techniques for examining and adjusting the track. This we hope will allow members to form small teams to tackle some of the regular track issues on a weekly / monthly basis. Equipment will be provided by the club allowing members to

carry out these tasks at weekends when the track is not being used, and if and when required.

APPEAL If any members have any spare time that they can give to help maintain the club tracks it would be greatly appreciated. We really could do with a few more volunteers for this ongoing activity.

Please also do not forget, if you do have an issue when you are running at the club that you write it down and report it as soon as possible. The track maintenance books are on the shelving next to the signing in table. Remember to note the track panel number and a simple description of what happened. That way the new and current teams will be able to rectify the issue and make good the track for other members to use and enjoy.

WWSME Christmas Lunch 2025

By Peter Brougham

On Saturday 13th December 27 members and partners enjoyed a magnificent Christmas lunch at The Angel, Upton Scudamore. In 15 years of attending WWSME Christmas Lunches this was probably the best lunch I have had. From feedback on The Club Whats App group all other attendees seem to agree. It was everything you would want it to be, hot, tasty and plenty of it. Served efficiently and quickly by very friendly staff. Besides the food the company was great and a change to the norm of rushing everywhere on open days, we could relax and enjoy each other's company. Thanks Tony Lowe for organising it. I think he may have made a provisional booking for next year! Thanks to all who managed to attend, for all those that had to cry off for various reasons, sorry you missed out on a fabulous event.

Santa's now having a well-deserved rest!

By Tony Lowe

What a wonderful day was had by all, to the most successful Santa event so far.

How do you judge what is a great event? Just listen to the comments from visitors and see the smiling faces of the children and the parents.

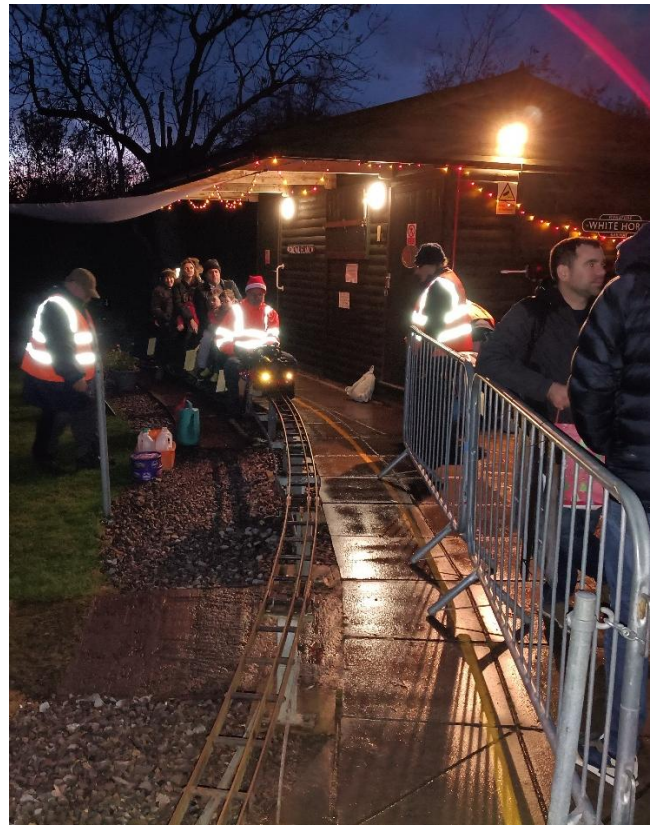
A big thanks go out to everyone involved. From the magic of the Christmas lights, the wrapping and organisation of the presents, the cakes and refreshments, locomotive & train preparation, tickets sales, sorting and decorating the club room, site preparation, erection of gazebo's, decorating Santa's grotto, Santa and his helpers, present runners and the meet and greet and if I have missed anything my apologies, but you all know who you are who took part in this year's event. Please enjoy below some of the photos from this year's event.

Our next Open day event will be on Saturday April 4th, 2026. The Easter Bunnies and Teddy bear event. We welcome as many members to come along be part of this as possible. Including the preparation which always takes place in the week up to the Open day events.

Remember all proceeds go back into the club to improve the facilities for us all to enjoy more detail will follow of our summer events in our March newsletter.

Enjoy and Happy New year to you all





For Sale - Ride On Railways Hercules Traveller

By Peter Fielding

Not sure how old this model is. I bought it from Station Road Steam in March 2020 and have only used it for light work at the WWSME track in Westbury, mostly solo or pulling one carriage with a couple of grandchildren on board. Prior to that it was owned by a family with a private 5" gauge garden railway with two of these models as well as steam locos. So overall it has had very light use and is still in excellent condition. They are easy to drive and there's a switch which can be used to select half or full power. Half power gives about 6mph, full power 11-12mph according to the manual though I have never actually checked this.

This loco is still in production and details can be found on the ROR website at <https://www.rideonrailways.co.uk/fivegauge/page01.html>. The list price for the fully assembled version is now £3501. And of course, any spares needed are readily available. An owner's manual plus the fitting instructions for the horns and sound card will come with it.

Since buying it, I have fitted a sound card and twin 24v horns operated via relays to protect the electronics. The batteries are those fitted when I bought it so are at least 5 years old, but both were at 12.4 volts when I checked them having not been used since May/June time. After an overnight charge they are now both holding 13+v. The loco voltmeter confirms both are fully charged and showing 3 greens.

A real benefit of this machine is the fact that it breaks down into 5 separate parts none of which weigh more than 12kg so it's easy to transport with and assemble at the track. One of the prime reasons I went for this model. The other benefit is that they need very little maintenance. Just a light oiling of the transfer gears. The wheels run on sealed journal bearings.

Sad to see it go but I don't use it much these days (only once in 2025) as I have another 5" gauge battery loco which I have since built myself and does all I need. As well as a 5" gauge steam loco project which I want to concentrate on for 2026.

The loco is kept in Hilpertons just West of Trowbridge. Viewing welcome and happy to demonstrate it running at the WWSME track. Hagglings starts at £1600 which is under half the cost of a new one.

Peter Fielding

01225 763567 or starfield181@gmail.com



Club Auction Day Saturday 17th January

By Tony Lowe

Time to dust off all the old models, parts, tools and machines and turn it into some money to help fund your hobby through 2026. A great club auction is always fun to be part of, either by putting some of your unused kit up for auction or bidding on some kit which is in the auction.

The Auction will start at 2pm. The Auction team being led by Jon Lawes we will be down at the club from 10am to receive models, kit, tools and anything related to the hobby,

Please use the booking form provided on the news letter and attach to your models, you will see that each form has three entry slips, please cut and attach to your auction entries the more information that can be provided with each lot the better. You can include a reserve price of what you would like to each lot to achieve.

You can enter as many lots as you wish.

We look forward to seeing you on the 17th January.

There will also be additional booking forms at the club if you require them.