

# Northern Association of Model Engineers

## Snippets for club notice boards

# November 2010

### NATIONAL RAILWAY MUSEUM

*Those 'in the loop' will recall that the National Railway Museum joined our esteemed organisation several years ago, having become aware of our existence through our excellent website. The relationship has flourished since then and the museum has hosted the Model Engineer of the Year Award ceremony for the last three years.*

*The museum has now invited our members to run on its 7¼" gauge track on a number of occasions through 2011, the first such being over the last weekend in February. NAME will reimburse petrol expenses to those bringing engines.*

*Anyone wishing to take an engine to run should contact our chairman Frank Cooper on 01205 750204, or email him at [yorkhouse.flyer@btinternet.com](mailto:yorkhouse.flyer@btinternet.com)*

### BOILER EXPLOSION!

Those who like to pontificate on the dangers of model boiler explosions must have thought their day had come when they spotted an impressive picture of the mangled wreckage of a small boiler on the front page of a national newspaper recently. You can see the carnage at <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1311946/Sainsburys-coffee-explosion-injures-7-caf.html> Fifteen firefighters, three ambulances and an unknown number of police attended, and the casualties were taken to Frimley Park hospital.

What a disappointment for our doomsters to find that the boiler in question was not a model locomotive boiler, but the boiler of a coffee machine in Sainsbury's cafe in Farnborough! Ah well, who knows, maybe some day? Personally, I doubt they will live long enough. The fact is that long before our present stringent regime of (supposedly) self regulation came into being, model engineers have managed to avoid such catastrophes, and since as long ago as 1972 our northern brethren have worked to the code of practice first published by the Northern Association of Model Engineers in that year. That code covered less than a single side of foolscap, and was every bit as effective in controlling boiler explosion risks as the present 'blue book' running to twenty one pages. OK, we know about H&SAW, PER, PSSR, PED, HSE, RSA, ACOPS, RIDDOR et al (don't we?), but you take the point?

The Sainsbury's coffee machine injured 15 people and hospitalized 6 according to reports.

As far as your editor has been able to establish no one was hospitalized or even seriously injured as a result of a model boiler 'explosion' in the 130 years or more that our hobby has been significantly active. The nearest we came was an incident on the 5th January 1902 (yes, 1902!) involving a large model boat on the Serpentine in Hyde Park (Oh yes, they did it in style then!) and reported in the February issue of Model Engineer in that year, reprinted in the Centennial Collection. Quite spectacular, and recommended reading.

The second nearest, though hardly an 'explosion', occurred as a GNR Atlantic emerged from the tunnel at the West Riding SLS track in the 1950's when the strapless sifbronzed belly seam opened up rather wetting the driver's trousers. This is almost certainly the same boiler later displayed in Charles Kennion's shop window. Needless to say, neither of these boilers would get off the starting block these days.

If anyone has documented evidence of other model boiler 'explosions', your editor would be very pleased to add them to his presently rather modest collection.

Your editor does get chided for his 'off-message' stance on boilers, but he does think that the efforts of our pundits would be better focused on derailments, spark burns, children attempting DIY amputations and ankle joint re-alignments, and ladies being strangled by scarves wrapped around the axles of passenger stock.

But there's nothing quite so exiting as a boiler explosion, is there? Who cares that it hardly ever happens!

### NEWSLETTERS

*The editor thanks the following clubs for their newsletters: Bradford, Cardiff, Chesterfield, Erewash Valley, Furness, Fylde, Northampton, Saffron Walden, Urmston, and Wigan, many less than we used to see, but always of interest.*

The Bulletin and Snippets supplement the website with the aim of keeping club members informed on what the Northern Association is doing in support of their chosen hobby. The Bulletin reports on meetings and decisions and actions taken by the Northern Association. Snippets is the place for interesting bits and bobs, and a place where your editor can have a rant from time to time, often reflecting the views of the silent majority in our much regulated hobby