

Boiler Seminars

There have been many changes over the years to the boiler code that lies at the heart of our self-regulated system of safety management. The original boiler code fitted neatly onto two sides of A4, or more probably quarto in 1950, the latest version fills a 22-page booklet with a level of detail that the originators of the original code would have thought entirely 'over the top'. In fact much of the new material has been driven by health and safety legislation in recent years, much of it stemming from our membership of the European community.

Having reached, hopefully, a plateau of stability in the evolution of new legislation and new ideas on its interpretation, the Northern Association felt it would be helpful to arrange a series of seminars at convenient venues around the country at which club boiler inspectors and other interested parties could be brought up to speed on the latest requirements, and could gain some insights into the historical background.

The first seminar was held on 8th November 2008 at the Marsden theatre in Worden Park, Leyland, hosted by the Leyland Society of Model Engineers. The second was held at Northampton on the 21st February and two more are currently planned at Urmston and Sheffield, probably in April 2009. More will be arranged as required.

The speakers at the seminars are predominantly people who have been directly involved in the evolution of the present code over the eleven years or so since the Northern Association played a leading role in rescuing the hobby from regulation under the Fairgrounds and Amusement Parks regulations, the strict enforcement of which would have sounded the death knell for large swathes of the hobby so far as any involvement of the public was concerned.

The speakers will cover the historical background to the present regime, and they will give details of the legislation driving it and the response of the model engineering community, the HSE, and the insurers. They will explain the theory and practice of boiler testing, the documentation requirements and boiler registration scheme, and they will propose guidelines on the design and construction of boilers and offer thoughts on the drawing up a formal design code for boilers possibly along the lines of the highly regarded Australian code. Practical boiler tests will be demonstrated to highlight the key features of the process, and the seminar will be wound up with a question and answer session.

The picture shows David Vere demonstrating how it should be done at the seminar at Leyland in November.

