

STRATHAVEN MODEL SOCIETY Ltd

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News Letter September 2017

Dear Member,

Members Information

Work at the park and the workshop continues with a reduced numbers of members being available during August mainly due to members being on holiday along with some illness. Hopefully we will have more members available during September. See report about Balloon festival below. As you all know Strathaven Park was awarded a Green Flag for the second year running. It was also voted the top public park in its category for Scotland and in the top ten for the UK.

We took delivery of Coal this month from a new supplier (Kane of E.K.) our current supplier had put prices up and was not being flexible on supply. Our new supply looks good quality anthracite and of a good size for Margaret and Eva. We have also had issues with starter coal for the engines last supply was doubtful quality , Kane's have supplied us Columbian coal of the highest quality with only 1-2 % ash produced ,we have taken one bag for testing and if it is found to be as good as it looks we can purchase more next year.

A reminder that the cash float in the bag for the park has been changed , there will be only one £50.00 float of 5 x £5 and 25 x £1.00 coins in future. Please remove float from the bag at the end of the running day before counting the day's takings and placing them in the cloth bags provided. Return the float in a plastic bag to the leather pouch ready for the next running day. PLEASE REMEMBER as of SUNDAY THE 15th of OCTOBER the round one pound coin will no longer be accepted as they are phased out.

Passenger Numbers

At the end of August we had carried **12,412** passengers only 197 short of the total for the full year in 2016. Comparing year on year we are **1,559** passengers ahead of last year at the end of August. September last year we had two no running days out of a total of six for the year this was due to poor weather, at present we have had only two days where we carried no passengers. Thank you to all who have come out during the running season even when the weather was not good and we had passenger numbers of (4, 12&30), these being the lowest passenger days for this year. Our average passenger running day is also up on last year with **236** for 2107 compared to **221** in 2016.

Balloon Festival

This year's Balloon Festival was a great success and thank you to all who made it so by turning out and staying till late to accommodate the number of people who wished to ride on the trains. Last year we carried **1888 passengers** this year **2086** over the two days. On both days we had over 1000 passengers well done to all who assisted and made it an enjoyable and safe weekend. Bill Carleton was also on hand for the Saturday crew to provide much needed feeding as we ran into the evening with passengers.

Strathaven Castle

Work progresses with our locomotive just not at the speed we had hoped for. After Brian had discussions with the supplier in late August early September it has been agreed that the loco which would be ready for supply in October should now be supplied to us late February 2018. Our warranty commences from delivery date and we felt that it is not useful to take delivery Oct/ Nov and then store it till next season. Therefore supplier has extra time now to make upgrades and testing at his leisure and we get a loco next year with a

warranty commencing from delivery date. Several issues have delayed Strathaven Castle initially shortage of steel, our loco is a one of and has challenged the design as all parts are being made specifically for her. Plus we asked for all services to be fitted within the bonnet of the loco leaving the tender with only the air reservoir to supply the system, giving us a lower seating position with an adjustable seat to suit all sizes of drivers.

Work Going Forward

Black 5 (Highlander) In the workshop the Black 5 progresses with several checks being made on the parts that we have from previous times and modifications are being made to fit the motion work. To the untrained eye it would appear that little has been done, but this work is crucial in making this a working locomotive for the future. Some parts are being scrapped and replaced either by buying in pieces pre cast or made and in some cases machined in our own workshop.

Homeside the saga goes on with this engine it was found on pressure testing the loco for her certification of the boiler that the super heater elements were leaking. These have been cleaned repaired and just last week past pressure testing at twice the working pressure of the locomotive. It is hoped that now this work has been finished. It leaves only a few more elements to be completed and a full hydraulic and steam test can be achieved.

Work has commenced in the workshop on a Tuesday night in making two sets of carriage wheels which will be fitted over the winter work schedule replacing sets that have spacers fitted. This will then give us all rolling stock with new wheels.

Track work had ceased during August but recommenced this week with another three sections completed. It leaves 14 sections to be completed up the back straight, which will only leave the section between the containers and the gate where part of the track is laid on a concrete base and each sleeper will require to be cut to fit the base. If you are free on Mondays let's try and finish this work before the open days in four week time.

Events

The special events that will occur in the park this year are:-

Saturday the 23rd of September (**September weekend holiday**)

Sunday the 24th of September (**September weekend holiday**)

Monday the 25th of September (**September weekend holiday**)

Sunday the 1st of October last running day (Any running after this date in the Park would be donations only)

Saturday the 7th of October (Club Open Weekend) No public running.

Sunday the 8th of October (Club Open Weekend) No public running.

South Lanarkshire School holidays are late this year with the October week's holiday commencing on the 14th of October which is after our open weekend, depending on weather and staff we may run a diesel service then.

Thank you to those who have already entered their names into the diary when they are available to help operate the railway during the forthcoming weeks.

Kind Regards

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