

Left Hand Running

The August 2007 Newsletter of The British Train Society
Illinois

A View From The Footplate

It is hard to believe that August is here already as the year is rapidly moving on. This is usually not an active time for our hobby but some of us did take time a couple of weeks ago out for an informal session at Harry's place to "play trains". Harry's layout is conducive to long train formations and his basement has lots of elbow room. The gathering made for a nice change of pace from our usual meeting format and I think we should make it part of our annual program. Speaking of which - the activities for the coming year offer a variety of topics. We have had offers from Wylie Robinson and Grant Harrison for presentations on DCC model operations and Diesel locomotive design respectively. Towards the end of the year we are thinking of the presentation from Ron McDaniel on Trains Around the World and of course our Swap Meet in October. The two module display at Richards High School in Oak Lawn is still in our planning for the end of September so I think we are in for an active fall. Also I received an unsolicited contact from an interested party to join our group so I think we can point to lots of progress. Unfortunately, as many of you are aware, we did suffer the loss of John Hayman who was very supportive of all we did. He will be missed for his color full stories as a fireman on the Erie Railroad and his personable presence. May he rest in peace.

Our next meeting is at John Derler's place and I will be interested to the changes in his layout, either completed or in the planning stage. Details of the meeting are provided later in this bulletin and I look forward to seeing many of you there.

Happy Modelling

Don Buchanan

Calendar of Coming Events

August 12th, 9:30 am – 3:00 pm
Great Midwest Train Show
Wheaton (DuPage County Fairgrounds)

August 18th, 1:30 pm
BTS Regular Meeting
Chicago (John Derler)

September 9th, 9:30 am – 3:00 pm
Great Midwest Train Show
Wheaton

September 15th, 1:30 pm
BTS Regular Meeting
Naperville (Harry Raynis)

October 14th, 9:30 am – 3:00 pm
Great Midwest Train Show
Wheaton

October 20th, 1:30 pm
BTS Regular Meeting
Clarendon Hills (Don Buchanan)

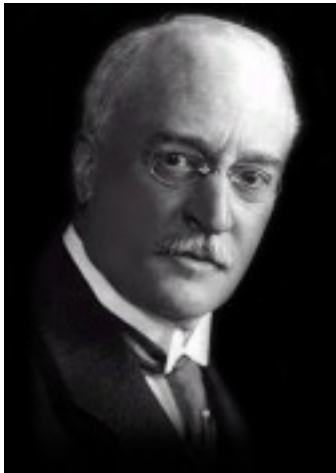
The Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of the British Train Society will be at John Derler's home in Chicago on August 18th. The program will be a presentation by Martin Venn.



Famous Railway Personalities

Dr. Rudolph Diesel



Rudolph Diesel was a German engineer who invented the internal-combustion engine which bears his name. His engine, which has matured into a machine much different from that which he envisioned, has revolutionized rail and water transport the world over.

Rudolph Christian Karl Diesel was born in Paris on March 18th, 1835. He was educated in Paris, London and Augsburg and studied at the Munich Polytechnic under Carl von Linde, inventor of the ice-making machine.

In 1874 he and others began experiments with a new combustion engine. At that time much was being done to find and develop efficient engines to provide compact and low cost power to the many new factories of industrial Europe. In 1892 Diesel was granted a patent for his compression-ignition engine.



The first Diesel-cycle engine was built in 1894 at the firm of Maschinenfabrik Augsburg (later M.A.N.). The engine weighed 5 tons and developed 20 hp at 172 rpm. He first exhibited his new engine at the Munich trade fair in 1897. The first engine sold went to a Bavarian manufacturer of matches, but it took some time to iron out all the bugs. Also in 1897, the Glasgow firm of Mirrlees Watson became the first licensee of Diesel's invention. At the

World's Exhibition of 1900 Diesel exhibited an engine fueled with pure peanut oil.

An early commercial application in transportation was made in 1904 in the form of two diesel powered ships built for service in the Baltic. The Scandinavians were quick to recognize the advantages of this new technology over steam for their extensive shipping endeavors and many further refinements of Diesel's invention were the efforts of Scandinavian engineers.

The first railway application of a diesel engine came in 1912 when the Prussian Railways purchased an experimental locomotive equipped with an engine made by Sulzer of Switzerland. Testing continued until interrupted by the outbreak of the WWI. Following the cessation of hostilities, experimental diesel locomotives were built in Germany, Russia, Great Britain and the USA, many using engines which had been developed for submarines. The naval requirement for submersible warships, the 'stealth' weapon of the day, has spurred much development of Diesel's engine.

Diesel's death came on September 29th, 1913 when he disappeared from a ferry while crossing the English Channel to attend a stockholder's meeting. It is generally believed that he took his own life, though rumors of mystery and intrigue circulated for years.

