

Canterbury and District Model Engineering Society

PRESS RELEASE

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All steamed up in Sturry

There was plenty of steam being 'let off' when the Canterbury and District Model Engineering Society staged its 8th 'Trains and Traction' event on Sunday.

The society has operated its 5-inch gauge railway at Bretts Quarries, Sturry for 33-years but in recent years the members who have specialised in building miniature railway locomotives have been joined by a number of model engineers interested in building, owning and running miniature traction engines and steam lorries.

Over the last few years the society has, with the kind co-operation of Bretts, staged its 'Trains and Traction' day when both the locomotives on the miniature railway and the traction engines have all been in steam on the same day and the event has proved popular with members and the public alike in what has turned out to be a very atmospheric event and Sunday was no exception, attracting around 1200 visitors over the course of the day.

Visitors were able to ride behind the miniature locomotives on the railway and several of the traction engines which have all been built or are owned by the members of the society or by visitors from other model engineering clubs around Kent.

Canterbury and District Model Engineering Society Chairman Paul Kemp said "This has been our most successful trains and traction day yet and we are grateful to the Brett Group for their co-operation in letting us hold what is our major annual public day. The fine weather certainly brought out our regular visitors together with this year, many who have not been to us before. Our principle aim has always been to deliver a family experience with traditional games for children at minimal cost together with the opportunity to experience the industrial heritage of steam in miniature. Regular visitors, some groups spanning 3 generations now look forward to the event and set up chairs and picnic blankets in the splendid country setting of the site, spending the whole day with us, with the older ones reminiscing about their memories of steam vehicles at work and giving the younger ones an opportunity to experience steam engines more their size. It also provides an opportunity for our members and visiting engine owners to put their locomotives, road and rail, through their paces, hauling passengers and demonstrating the power of steam".

"We had around 20 miniature traction engines and steam lorries in operation around the site and a dozen or so railway locomotives hauling passenger trains around our track and at times we had some quite long queue for the rides, but all our passengers waited patiently and we are very pleased that our efforts have given a great deal of pleasure to people of all ages and hope we can repeat the event next year". For those that missed this opportunity there is still the chance before the end of September to visit and experience the miniature railway on our monthly public running days, details on our web site www.cdmes.org. Thanks to the foresight of the Brett Family some 33 years ago and latterly the Brett Group in continuing to support us by allowing use of the site, many thousands of people have had the opportunity to experience in miniature the bygone age of steam"

Ends.

