

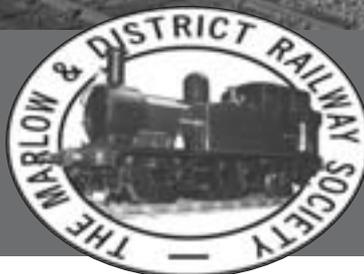
THE MARLOW DONKEY



Edition

109

June 2005



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The Marlow Donkey

The Magazine of the Marlow & District Railway Society

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FRONT COVER PHOTOGRAPHS

Top: Britannia Pacific 70015 heads west near White Waltham.

Bottom: The pioneer GWR diesel railcar W1 near Maidenhead late in its career.

both: Ken Lawrie

TIMETABLE

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

All meetings are held in the Garden Room, Liston Hall, Liston Road, Marlow, at 7.45 for 8.00pm.

Thursday 16 June	THE LLANELLY & MYNYDD MAWR RAILWAY	MRC Price
Wednesday 20 July	CHARTER TRAIN AT LEIGHTON BUZZARD RLY	by car
August	NO MEETING	
Thursday 15 September	IRISH RAILWAYS	Kim Fulbrook
Thursday 20 October	FILM NIGHT	Frank Banham
Thursday 17 November	THE MODERN FREIGHT SCENE	Ian Francis
Thursday 15 December	CHRISTMAS SOCIAL	
Thursday 19 January	MEMBERS' PHOTOGRAPHIC EVENING (Provisional)	
Thursday 16 February	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING	

FORTHCOMING VISITS

Sunday 3 July	LLANGOLLEN RAILWAY	by coach from Marlow.
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Please note: The above programme is correct at press time but subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances. Please check the Society's website www.mdrs.org.uk for the latest details.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

It was with some regret that the Society was compelled to leave the Royal British Legion venue due to accusations by the less than jovial steward. It all stemmed from the Christmas social when he accused us of switching off a freezer containing food, allegedly worth in excess of £200. It appears the food was for use some 36 hours following our function and according to the steward all the food had defrosted when found on the Saturday. I, having stated that food should be allowed to defrost, carried no weight with him, and we were given the ultimatum to pay up or relocate. Letters were sent to the chairman of the RBL outlining our side of the dispute but to date no replies have been forthcoming. At the February meeting he challenged me again about payment. I replied stating that if he could submit receipts to verify the purchases of food to replace the alleged earlier loss the Society would compensate him in some way. His very abrupt reply to this request, and again stating that we should go, has led the committee to wonder if it was a put up job. Faced with this ultimatum enquiries were made at

Liston Hall and having been accepted this will now be our regular venue. It is after all our Society that comes first.

Julian Heard has now stood down from his post as secretary after many years of dedicated service. Of all the committee positions this is by far the most difficult and time consuming. I therefore offer my heartfelt thanks to Julian for all the work he has undertaken. Malcolm Margetts has duly agreed to follow in Julian's footsteps and I know Malcolm will relish the challenge.

I must also give a round of thanks to Tim Edmonds who has toiled away to get the Society registered on the universal fountain of information, the World Wide Web.

Various outings are planned for dates in July as detailed elsewhere in the 'Donkey'. Please support them if you are able to.

Gordon Rippington

SOCIETY AND LOCAL NEWS

NEW MEMBERS

It is a pleasure to welcome two new members to the Society, Roy Symons and Brian Hopkinson are both from Marlow. We hope you enjoy the Society's activities.

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The March meeting was the annual members' photographic evening (delayed from its usual spot by Nick Lera's presentation in January). As always a good selection was forthcoming taking us around the world to such diverse places as Ireland, continental Europe and China, whilst other offerings took us back to BR of a quarter century ago. Thanks to all the members who contributed.

At the April meeting our guest speaker was John King who presented a talk on the pioneer commercial air services provided by the Big Four railway companies during the 1930's. This was an eye-opener to many of us who hadn't realised how extensive the operation was.

This was our first meeting held in the Liston Hall. Our Chairman explains the circumstances leading to this relocation in his notes on the previous page.

May saw Julian Heard acting as MC for a video evening. Highlights included films of the Bluebell, K&WVR, Swanage and the World Premiere(!) of Gordon Rippington's epic chronicling the visit he and the "two Peters" made to China last November to see the finale of real steam on the Jing Peng Pass.

MARK DOES IT AGAIN!

As many of you know MDRS associate member Mark Hopwood is the Operations Director of London Lines - c2c, Great Northern and Silverlink. Having first proved that by attention to detail it is possible to run a 100% on-time service on c2c, not just on a Sunday but a weekday too, the latest national performance figures reveal that he has got the Euston - Watford Junction line of Silverlink Metro running at 99.3% reliability which is not only well above its target but also beats the average delay minutes of the Japanese Bullet Trains! Chiltern it seems, are not amused at being knocked off the top spot for London commuter performance

EDDIE LEWCOCK

Eddie has recently moved to a smaller house near Bedford so we shall not be seeing him at future meetings although he remains a member. We wish him well.

GERRARDS CROSS

Work continues on the new Tesco. On 18th March 2005 60017 was at the head of a stone train being unloaded in the Turnback Siding whilst 165020 passed on the Up Main. The conveyor taking the material to the construction site can be seen on the right of the picture (*top right*). This continues up and over the approach road to the site (*bottom right*). The tunnel lining is just visible between the footbridge and roadbridge arch.

PETER BOND

It is with great sadness we have to record the passing of Peter Bond on 8th April at the age of 83. Peter was a life long railway enthusiast and an enthusiastic member of the Society for many years although failing health, he had suffered from cancer, diabetes and heart trouble, meant he was unable to attend meetings for the last year. Gordon Rippington represented the Society at the funeral.

PETER'S LEGACY

Peter Bond has bequeathed his entire railway library, around 400 volumes, to the Society with instructions that the collection should be sold and the money raised be used by the club for something we deem worthwhile. The Committee has decided to put the money raised towards the purchase of a digital projector to equip us to handle the new technology of the 21st century. This will be a fitting way to remember Peter and benefit the members in general.

Once the collection is passed onto us by Peter's family the collection will be catalogued ready for you to make bids. Please be generous as you will enable us to fulfil one of Peter's final wishes.

two photos: Tim Edmonds



CHILTERN OUT OF GREATER WESTERN

London & Western Railway, the joint venture set up by Chiltern Railways parent Laing Rail and GNER, has failed to pre-qualify to for bid for the Greater Western franchise renewal. Successful pre-qualifiers are First Group (the present holder), National Express (holder of the Wessex franchise which becomes part of Greater Western) and Stagecoach Holdings. These will now submit their bids from which the new operator to take over for seven years from 1st April 2006 will be selected.

No reason has been made public for the exclusion of L&W which will be a great disappointment to both the partners and the travelling public who viewed the prospect of the two most successful TOC coming together to run Great Western with excitement, particularly in the light of what is regarded as a rather lack-lustre performance by First.

YOU COULD MAKE IT UP!

Some of you may have read with disbelief the piece in the August 2004 *Railway Magazine* that traincrews will now have to wear hard hats when outside their trains to go to the signal post telephone or give the "right away". Relax, it's a wind up. It seems a group of drivers at an

unidentified location thought it up as a suitable story earlier that year but it outlived its intended one-day shelf life and spread being embellished with each retelling until the *RM* picked it up and was taken in!

As it appeared the new "regulation" would apply only to Network Rail this caused a cynical reaction from Chiltern Railways and LUL who operate over LUL (Amersham to Harrow-on-the-Hill) and Network Rail (Gunnersbury to Richmond) respectively. Anxious to limit expenditure by not issuing hats to all crews and equally not incur delays, the two operators suggested they jointly develop an automatic pick-up and set-down apparatus along the lines of that which was used to exchange single line tokens!

It speaks volumes for the amount of petty red-tape strangling the industry today that such a story took root and was believed. The fear in the industry now is that the HSE will pick it up and think: "That's a good idea." But, perhaps not, the rule that track workers have to wear them at all times is real but originated at NR not the HSE, to make their staff look "more professional" as the public expect "to see construction workers wearing them today".

WILDENRATH - 40 Years Ago

Alan Costello

In the last issue of the Marlow Donkey, John Sears described his visit to the Siemens test centre. Here Alan Costello recalls its earlier incarnation.



Back in 1963 I moved to RAF Wildenrath to work in the Meteorological Office for 3 Years.

Whilst was there, together with my wife and 4 month year old son, we lived in married quarters on the camp with the RAF. The only railway lines on the camp at that time were two lines that ran parallel, from the main entrance, with the main camp road, a little way into the base. They were used (not very often) to convey supply wagons from a connection off German Railways. It had

its own diesel shunter owned by the Royal Engineers and operated by the Royal Corps of Transport based at another camp nearby. The picture (*left*) shows the shunter in July 1965.



Also a couple of miles away was the British Army supply depot at Arsbeck. They had an internal narrow gauge rail system consisting of a number of flat wagons hauled by petrol locos. On my second posting to Germany, in 1975, a party of railway enthusiasts were allowed to play trains for an afternoon. The picture (*above*) shows my son Paul (an ex-club member), in the driving seat. Little did we know then, that 30 years later he would be working for EWS driving stone trains out of Peak Forest.

COMMUNITY RAILWAYS

John Sears

The beach could be of coral sand, the sea is the complementary shades of blue - almost turquoise inshore, then deeper blue out into the bay. Jutting into the sea is a headland, most of it covered by a town not Mediterranean-white, but granite-grey. It's a sight to stir the urge to travel, and in the foreground is the means, two 150/1s jazzed up in Wessex Trains' promotional livery, St. Erth bound on the St. Ives branch. Not quite a couple of small prairies on ten or more coaches, but the line's still open, still carrying locals and emmetts on, geographically, the last branch in England.

The scene graces the front cover of Community Rail Development Strategy, the SRA's November 2004 document outlining their policy "to improve the financial performance, value-for-money and social value of local and rural railways." It's one line from the list of fifty-seven proposed Community Rail lines listed as appendix A of the Strategy; more importantly, it's one of the seven lines chosen as pilot schemes to test the theories included in the SRA's strategy. The pilot schemes are listed in the table at the bottom of this page.

Pay attention now to some facts and figures, which will hopefully provide some background to the economics of community railways. The following figures are for 2002/3 and come from the Railway's various distribution systems and the back office systems that crunch the data captured. A big caveat lector here, the nature of the systems is such that not all data is captured in a meaningful way, which hinders analysis.

The usage of some stations is staggeringly, but in many cases, unsurprisingly, minute. In Achanalt's case, 186 passengers a year means that one passenger appears on the platform for just about every tenth train. If someone arrived on Monday's first train - the 8.42 to Inverness - the next passenger would appear for the 13.15 to Inverness on Tuesday. Atherstone, on the Trent Valley main line, with ten rail replacement buses each day except Sundays, does rather better, at almost two passengers for each "train". The annual patronage at the



Community railway or vital feeder to the National network? That's the debate raging over the future of The Donkey. 165122 at Maidenhead.

photo: MMPA

intermediate stations on the Newquay branch ranges from 1,005 at Luxulyan to 574 at Bugle. Newquay itself had 76,102, or very roughly, 30 passengers per train. On an average day 240 humans will arrive at, or depart from, Newquay by train.

Examples of patronage on some of the pilot scheme lines are: 11 passengers per train at Looe, 17 at St. Ives - each train on that line averages 24 passengers. To quote some local examples: Saunderton three passengers per train, Marlow 17 per train, on average each of the branch trains between Maidenhead and Marlow carries 41 passengers. Back in August, 1995, the 16.31 Leeds to Lancaster train had this business after Skipton: six passengers on at three of the eight stations, and 14 off at six of the stations - no passengers at all at Clapham and Wennington. Twenty-one years earlier, the 14.15 from Morecambe picked up two passengers at Bentham, the only one of the five stations between Carnforth and Hellifield to generate any patronage for the train.

It is easy to see from figures such as those how revenue on many lines is never going to be anywhere near

Line	Length of line (miles)	No. of trains Dec. 1947	No. of trains Feb. 1961	No. of trains Network Rail Timetable 12/04-6/05
St. Erth - St. Ives	4.25	12	15	25
Liskeard - Looe	8.75	8	9	10
St. Budeaux Jct - Gunnislake	c. 12	5	7	8
Watford Jct - St. Albans Abbey	6.50	25	32	21
Allington Jct - Skegness	50 +	10	16	15
Barnsley - Huddersfield	21	10	15	18
Guisborough Jct - Whitby; 2 routes, see notes.	32 +	i) 4; ii) 4* iii) 5	ii) 5; iii) 5	ii) 4

Notes: i) from Whitby West Cliff to Middlesbrough via Loftus.
 ii) via the Esk Valley.
 iii) from Malton to Whitby
 * includes two through trains.

expenditure on everyday maintenance, let alone anything major. If the nation decides that it requires passenger trains to run on such routes it also accepts that it will have to pick up most of the costs. It is also likely to require that everything possible is done to increase revenue and reduce costs.

The SRA's Community Rail Development Strategy aims to be the basis for actions to achieve those imperatives. When the strategy was launched much of the media rolled out the old closure threat stories. Most of the routes listed for community rail partnerships are branch lines that have been closure candidates in the past, with patronage that is often negligible for much of the year. A list of poorly performing lines is always going to look like a roll call of lines on death row. However, extrapolating the costs incurred by such lines to the whole network shows them to be not much more expensive per train-mile than lines in the old Network South East territory. One conductor guard worked train every hour never costs the same to provide as a half-hourly service of electric trains serving staffed stations.

It is significant that the strategy mentions that there is a need to improve the railway industry's knowledge of the true costs of operating individual sections of line.

It seems unbelievable that even today, with more computing power than ever, Network Rail can claim that they have not got relevant data to disaggregate costs on a geographical basis. The DfT has requested such information as part of the local decision making required by the new Railways Act. The fact that it is not available surely casts doubt on the veracity of all the figures quoted for maintaining and operating individual section of the railway. A figure of £100,000 per mile per year is given as the cost of providing the infrastructure for community lines. The Blaenau branch has twice recently had millions spent on it to repair flood damage - far more money than its revenue can ever repay. Even so, at the quoted rule of thumb, its 28 miles would cost £2.8 million each year. The Central Wales line's infrastructure would cost about £8.5 million annually. Network Rail spent £2.5 million for the work done recently on the Whitby branch. Local examples of expensive infrastructure include the bridges over the Thames on local branches.

Infrastructure costs such as lengthy bridges can't easily be reduced, but others can. Do the eight trains a day on the Whitby branch wear out the track as quickly as all that freight on the Settle and Carlisle? Do all those miles of line in the Highlands need fencing? The SRA believe that an infrastructure cost reduction of 30% equals a 23% reduction in subsidy. Any serious study of the costs of railways (not just "community" ones) must take a very profound interest in what is done, why and how, when it comes to infrastructure. Alternative uses for parts of the infrastructure no longer required to operate the railway must be found.

The re-use of railway buildings is an obvious example - where they still exist, of course! The old station buildings should generate income, rather than use it for maintenance. Costs are reduced too, both normal maintenance costs and repair costs because there is less

vandalism. The aim should be to manage station areas to a line's best interest. Finding local businesses that are able to make use of old railway buildings is a job for locally based people who can respond to local information and make the contacts necessary. It's pointless restoring buildings if they have no use - Hellifield proves the point. Years after they were restored the station buildings have only just found an occupant. The Mid Cheshire Community Rail Partnership (CRP) is gradually finding uses for the stations on the line from Chester to Altrincham. Northwich will have a cyber café, community facilities and an exhibition area; Greenbank has a church and Delamere could become a visitor centre for the eponymous forest. The main requirement is for lots of local effort, seeking out and convincing businesses and organisations that it is a worthwhile endeavour.

The main point of community railway designation is to generate more management attention and marketing for lines - much more. An idea of the effort involved, which must be continuing, not just a one-off, one time burst of activity, is shown by the list of organisations involved in the Tyne Valley CRP, which is well-sited in the station at Hexham. The partners include: The Countryside Agency, Tynedale District Council, Tynedale Communities Opportunities Fund, EU "Leader + Fund" Tynedale and Tyne and Wear Rural Transport Partnerships, together with representatives from Cumbria and Northumberland County Councils and nine other local agencies and groups. It's no mean feat to manage all the relationships!

Let's have a look at a case study, and what could be a better one than the Midland's glorious S&C?

After the Tories refused permission to close the line in 1989 the Secretary of State determined that the Settle Carlisle Development Company be set up with the emphasis on developing and promoting the line. It is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, and has a board of directors, who elect a chairman, and is based in an office in Settle. Northern Rail and county councils provide funds - most come from the TOC. The chief object is to encourage use of the line, through means that include commercial activities. The Dales railcard is sold under a contract to Northern Rail, who pay commission on sales of it. The railcard is handled by Appleby booking office, which also oversees group travel (more commission). The Development Company also employ the station staff at Settle and Appleby - doing so permits better hours and cover arrangements. The costs are reimbursed by Northern Rail.

A more recent undertaking is the running, since April last year, of the on-train refreshment trolleys. Five staff are employed, with bases at Settle and Appleby for stores. Cumbria gave a grant for the trolleys, another example of the need for, at the least, "seed" funds. The trolleys are making a small profit; they have to cover their costs. Currently a total of about twelve staff are employed by the company - but all human resources aspects must be considered, and will add to costs. However the Development Company can take on things that TOCs can't handle as well, or as cheaply. There is a need for more local authority types as directors, not just for their skills and contacts, but also as a source of funds! The company must cover its costs, especially with the need to

pay staff. Too great a reliance on the TOCs for funds by similar devcos could lead to DfT Rail types asking the TOCs why they are paying out this money. In effect Northern Rail is contracting out to the company, which must prove that it is value for money, and, by being locally based, is doing a better job than Northern Rail's own staff could.

One of the Devco directors is chairman. of the Friends of the S&C (and also a trustee of the S&C trust, see below), as are Heidi Mottram, Managing Director of Northern Rail, and Dyan Crowther, late of Arriva Trains Northern, now of Network Rail revealing the inter-relationships of the organisations working to support the line. The Friends, the biggest such group in the country, with 3,000 members at £10 a go, also provide money. They produce on-train guides, and run shops at Settle and Appleby. Their volunteers assist with group travel.

The Settle-Carlisle Trust is a charity, originally set up to raise money for work on structures. They work together with organisations such as English Heritage and Railway Heritage. Evidence of their efforts can be seen at places such as Kirkby Stephen station, visited in March by Prince Charles before his cab ride on the Duchess. The Trust also needs commercial activities for a revenue stream, achieved by activities such as letting offices. The refurbished station buildings at Kirkby Stephen will be so let; similar schemes have already been carried out at Ribbleshead and Horton.

The Settle and Carlisle line now carries a large amount of freight. Whilst many lines designated as community lines do not carry any freight, especially the pilot scheme lines, the full list includes many that do, or have potential to. Will "community" status reduce or remove the chance of it in future? Some work has been done to identify such lines - the Falmouth branch is designated a "TERFN route", that is, a "Trans European Rail Freight Route", acknowledging the potential use of the line as a feeder for a container port. The existing freight flows on the Sheerness branch are also noted, as are those on the Barrow to Carlisle Cumbrian Coast line.

There are some unusual examples in the full list of proposed Community Rail lines: the aforementioned Sheerness branch has had its service linked with a Sittingbourne to Dover stopping service in the Integrated Kent Franchise timetable plans. Some obvious candidates are missing; the Blackpool South to Colne service is listed, but only as far as Kirkham, and again from Gannow Junction to Colne. The Blackpool to York "Roses Link" service covers the route from Preston, providing a service for Blackburn and Accrington, and is the reason that not all the route has been designated. However, the Colne service calls at stations that are archetypal local stops, and Lancashire County Council commissioned a study by ACoRP on options for a partnership for the line. Its findings suggest establishing a CRP, and several measures, including stronger bus-rail links - including one from Colne to Skipton, a route where a group is campaigning for re-building of the closed Midland line.

Microfranchising has been suggested as an option for Community Rail lines - not that silly when one considers

the Island Line is already a franchise. The Looe and Gunnislake branches could be one such, and the new Great Western franchise is designed to accommodate that. Think back to the early days of railways when there were lots of small local companies - not least the Great Marlow Railway. Many such companies were operated by larger ones, but others such as the Pembroke and Tenby had their own loco workshops. There still are some small depots, for example, Machynlleth, and any new build of stock for local lines should be designed for maintenance in the field. South West Trains has already bought some "heritage" units for its Lymington branch, and Arriva Trains Wales has started enquiring about dmus for some of its lines. Local traincrew depots too are an obvious step, so traincrew start and end their day where the service ends for the day, not miles away. It's all re-inventing the wheel really, as is stabling trains locally - think of the old branch sheds, where the train service started at the terminus. Creating the necessary route knowledge is less expensive with bespoke links, although adequate cover will require some skilled negotiating with the staff.

There are many examples of recent successes in increasing the patronage of lines by local efforts. The Sheringham branch's revenue has doubled over the last seven years. The SRA believes it "should be possible to double originating fare revenue over a 5 year period". Measures could include: local initiatives, better marketing, local partners to raise awareness, tailoring services to local needs, a more "bespoke" fares structure, local railcards, carnets, and, not least! collecting all the fares. Properly integrated rail and bus services are slowly increasing in number. Lancashire has been active, with interchanges at Clitheroe and Carnforth and a new one under construction at Burscough Bridge.

"Barbara Castle introduced a subsidy payment for each unremunerative service.....in recognition of the social and political value of the line ". That political value still applies today: taxpayer support also aims to reduce congestion, aid local economies, and is also made for environmental reasons. It's even given for transport reasons, as is shown by the 80 minute longer journey time between Gunnislake and Plymouth taken by the bus replacement service during a recent engineering block. Another planning consideration is rural population growth - most of the incoming people are likely to require good transport links to the flesh pots left behind.

ACoRP are determined to maintain the existing momentum behind community rail partnerships and to build on it in the future. The SRA's strategy document has certainly laid out plenty of proposals, and the chances offered should be taken up enthusiastically. Promotion these days appears to be a sine qua non, perhaps part of the reason 87019, with its 31 years service on the West Coast Main Line, was named "ACoRP" by Pete Waterman in Crewe's platform 3 on Tuesday 15th of March. Well, that was the official reason, but pure enthusiasm for railways played a part at least as large. Generating similar enthusiasm amongst government agencies, businesses and "stakeholders" of the country will be vital for the continuing success of "Community Railways"

ADELANTE DIAGRAMS

Keith Brown

From 12th December 2004 to 11th June 2005

On a dark winter evening, for something better to do, I extracted some statistics from the above diagrams for the 14 five-car sets based at Old Oak Common (OOC) depot that may be of interest to members. Only ten sets are used in any one-day which I felt was surprising. Is this due to their reliability problems or are First Great Western and First Great Western Link just being cautious?

The ten diagrams are numbered OC501 to OC510 for every day of the week. The unit on OC501 on day one takes up diagram OC502 the next day and so on. The unit with the most daily mileage is OC510 which clocks up 866 whilst operating out and back services to Oxford, Exeter and Swansea on a weekday. The unit away from a depot the longest is the one on diagram OC503 that leaves OOC at 05.00. It finishes its working day at Laira, Plymouth at 02.51 the following morning having performed return journeys to Cardiff and Cheltenham and an outward trip to Exeter and then running ECS to Laira. This unit then works the 06.00 M-F or the 07.00 SO service to Paddington. This is the only diagram that does not require the unit to visit Oxford M-F but all ten do so on a Saturday.

Eight of the ten diagrams require the unit to start from OOC of which six of these also terminate there. Two diagrams start away from London, one each at Laira, Plymouth and St. Phillips Marsh, Bristol and both these finish at OOC while diagrams OC503 and OC505 start at OOC and become those that terminate away from London.

The units on diagrams OC508 and OC510 leave OOC at 03.43 M-F and coupled together travel ECS to Oxford. The rear unit is uncoupled and works the 06.45 to Paddington but the leading unit travels on ECS to Moreton-in-Marsh to form the 05.55 service from there to Paddington.



*Stylish but temperamental, Adelante 180108 passes Dolphin Jct on 12 August 2003
photo: Mike Walker*

The unit arriving at Bristol at 21.01 on a Saturday remains unused until working the 07.55 Bristol-Paddington on a Monday. The only Cl.180 to travel on the WoE mainline on a Sunday is the 20.15 Paddington-Plymouth in order to be available for the Monday 06.00 service to London.

During the week only two service trains are formed of two units working together. M-F the 05.15 Paddington-Oxford is one which when divided form the 06.38 and 07.25 return services. The other is the Sunday 17.30 Paddington-Bristol TM that, when divided, work the 19.40 and 21.30 return services.

Mileage and time away from a depot for the units on the ten diagrams are:

Mileage. Monday-Friday 7633, Saturdays 6540 and Sunday 3557 a total of 17,731.

Time away from depot. (hours) M-F 187, Saturday 173 and Sunday 96 a total of 456. Calculating averages is easy with just ten units operating.

Class180: terminating services from Paddington.

Day	OXF	WOR	G.M	HFD	EXE	BTM	CHE	CDF	SWA	TN
M-F	10	3	3	2	4	3	4	2	1	0
Sat	19	2	6	1	2	2	0	0	0	1
Sun	2	3	2	2	0	2	3	0	0	0

Key. OXF: Oxford. WOR: Worcester Shrub Hill, GM: Great Malvern, HFD: Hereford, EXE:Exeter St.Davids, BTM: Bristol Temple Meads, CHE: Cheltenham, CDF: Cardiff, SWA: Swansea and TN: Taunton.

STEAM'S SUN SETS IN THE EAST

In 2004 we celebrated the 200th anniversary of the birth of the first steam locomotive, by the end of the year, steam's last great show was drawing to a close on China's fabled Jing Peng Pass. In November, Pete Greatorex and Dave Theobald made their annual pilgrimage, accompanied by Peter Robins and Gordon Rippington who was making his first visit - "It's now or never" was Gordon's comment. Very true, by the time of their visit

roughly half the daily trains were being handled by diesels although there was still enough steam action to keep them fully occupied but by the end of the year steam had been almost totally vanquished. For those of us who missed it, here is a final tribute to the last great steam show on earth.

Photos by Dave Theobald

At Shangdian in Jing Peng Pass. QJ 2-10-2s 7002 and 7039 head an east bound on 9th November.



Our intrepid travellers try out a Chinese QJ for size. Pete Greatorex contemplates baling out in an unapproved fashion as Peter Robins looks on (*right*) whilst Gordon Rippington trys a different "chair" for size (*above*) - good to see he's got a brew on!



Coal is the life blood of the Ji Tong line. QJs 6986 and 981 lift east bound loads away from Tunnel No. 4 on 9th November.



Dwarfed by their surroundings at XiaKengZi, QJs 6878 and 7038 climb steadily with an east bound freight on 12th November. (*above*)



Sunset for working steam at Daban Depot as three QJs gather for servicing at the world's last real steam depot on 15th November . (*left*)

25 Years Ago.

Two significant 150th railway anniversaries were celebrated in 1980, with the high-profile 'Rocket 150' Liverpool & Manchester events overshadowing those of the 'Invicta 150' Canterbury & Whitstable. The C&W celebrations began with a Civic Procession at Canterbury on Saturday 3 May, with the main event being a Cavalcade of Historic Transport on Bank Holiday Monday 5 May going through Whitstable in the morning and Canterbury in the afternoon. The star of the event was the original locomotive 'Invicta' carried on a lowloader. The main L&M events took place on the Late Spring Bank Holiday weekend, with the Rainhill Trials Re-enactment and a Grand Cavalcade taking place at Rainhill on three successive days - 24, 25 and 26 May. Bold Colliery was used as a base for the array of motive power taking part in the cavalcade, but alas 'Rocket' was derailed in the sidings on Saturday and was unable to make an appearance.

On 13 June some scenes for the 20th Century Fox film "Chariots of Fire" were filmed at Taplow station. The southern platforms were used to depict Cambridge station in 1919. Props used to achieve this included a collection of historic vehicles and a horse-drawn cab



After being drawn through Canterbury in a Civic Procession, the Canterbury & Whitstable Railway's 0-4-0 'Invicta' (Robert Stephenson 24/1830) is displayed opposite the original station building in North Lane on 3rd May 1980.



At the Rainhill 150 Cavalcade, the 'modern image' was represented by the ill-fated APT-P. Sets 370004 and 370003 were dragged by 56071, then itself fairly new but now history. 26th May 1980.

Photos: Tim Edmonds

in the station forecourt, whilst a portable generator was used to provide clouds of steam.

On 1 August the twelve-coach 10.00 Dublin - Cork express was derailed at Buttevant, near Mallow, killing 18 and injuring 62. This was the Irish Republic's worst railway accident and was caused by a misunderstanding between a signal man and a pointsman which led to the points being set to a siding instead of the main line.

Public services over the first section of the Tyne & Wear Metro system began on 11 August with Metro-Cammell articulated units running between Haymarket and Tynemouth via Benton at ten-minute intervals.

The line between Princes Risborough and Bicester North

was completely closed on 13 August as a consequence of the derailment of a freight train at Ashendon Junction. Five bitumen wagons had become derailed and damaged about two miles of what was then a single track line. The repair operation were hampered by poor access, flash floods and shortage of ballast so that closure lasted until 11 September. During the blockade the fast Paddington - Birmingham services were diverted via Oxford, while a Chiltern Trains charter excursion from West Ruislip to Grange-over-Sands on 24 August took the former Great Central line to Calvert and thence via Claydon LNE Junction to Bletchley Denbigh Hall Junction - the first passenger train over the Bletchley flyover for several years.

15 Years Ago.

Because the Buckfastleigh branch had not been generating enough revenue, the Dart Valley Light Railway Company (who also operated the Torbay & Dartmouth Railway from Paignton to Kingswear) agreed to let volunteers run the line for the 1990 season. Richard Elliott was appointed Volunteer Line Manager to co-ordinate the project.

There was a double naming ceremony on 1 May celebrating the 150th anniversary of the postage stamp. 90 019 was named 'Penny Black' at Euston and 47 474 was named 'Sir Rowland Hill' at Kidderminster. At the Euston ceremony Mr Adrian Shooter, Director - BR Parcels, reminded guests of his sector's commitment to the Royal Mail.

Among speed improvements introduced with the summer timetable was Inter-City push-pull operation on the Liverpool Street - Ipswich - Norwich route. This was the beginning of a phased introduction, with the whole push-pull fleet in use by October. On the former Midland route from St Pancras, faster timings gave the best ever journey times to the East Midlands and Sheffield.

Following the announcement that Coalville Mantle Lane was to close, the tenth - and last - open day was held there on 3 June. Organised by Railfreight, the event was a great success, with the locos on show including 'Princess Royal' Pacific 46203 'Princess Margaret Rose' and an array of preserved and in-service diesel power.

Following approval from HM Inspector of Railways, the Scottish Industrial Railway Centre at Minnivey Colliery,



In pouring rain, former NCB Waterside 0-4-0ST No.10 (Andrew Barclay 2244/1947) gets up steam ready for the inaugural rides at the Scottish Industrial Railway Museum on 24 June 1990.

Dalmellington, offered its inaugural brake van rides on 24 June. Ex NCB Waterside Andrew Barclay 0-4-0ST No 10 provided the power.

In Norfolk, the 15-inch gauge Bure Valley Railway was officially opened on 10 July. The line runs on the trackbed of the former Great Eastern Railway line between Wroxham and Aylsham, which closed to passengers in 1952.

With push-pull operation recently introduced, 86214 'Sans Pareil' brings the 11.00 Norwich to Liverpool Street into Stowmarket station on 26 May 1990.



STEAM ENGINES RETURN TO PORTLAND

Alan Costello

On 9th April 1965, Ivatt Type 2 41284 travelled to the end of the Weymouth & Portland Railway line at Sheepcroft yard (just beyond Easton station), collected 2 wagons and returned to Weymouth yard picking up some more wagons on the way. That was the last steam engine to work the line and so should have been the last steam engine to be seen at Portland.



Then, in 2003 we decided to move back to our birthplace of Weymouth. In July we stayed at Weymouth for a few days to look at houses. On the 10th, we drove over to Portland for the market and to have a look around the Tout Quarry Sculpture Park. Access was through the Tradecroft Industrial Estate. After passing a Post Office unit

Locos at Portland. Above MN 35018 British India Line and the unidentified 0-4-0ST. Another 0-4-0ST Albert (right) and M7 0-4-4T 30053 (below) prior to being stripped down for overhaul



in a yard to the right was a large steam engine and a diesel shunter on a short length of track. A more detailed look showed it to be a rebuilt Merchant Navy, West Country or Battle of Britain with its outer casing removed. From a note in the Railway Magazine, I later found out that it was 35018 British India Line. I gather that it is in store rather than being worked on and after 2 years it still



The frames and bunker of LMS 3F 0-6-0T 47160



The unidentified industrial 0-6-0 with the now stripped 30053 beyond.

looks the same (apart from being a little weather-worn). On further visits over the next few months more items appeared on the site. They included a road crane that is used to lift the boilers of the locos, a fork lift truck, more boilers, some short lengths of concrete sleeper track and a 4 wheeled petrol wagon (ex Bournemouth depot).

By May 2004 an unmarked green 0-4-0ST appeared and was put in front of 35018. Later in the year, a prefabricated building was erected and by Christmas it housed the tender of BB Class 34072. In March 2005, on site were 2 locos from the Swanage Railway. The first an industrial 0-6-0T *Cunarder* carrying the number 47160, followed by M7 30053. It didn't take long before the boilers were removed from both engines. Also present is a 0-4-0ST Albert. There is also another small 0-6-0T industrial loco that has been dismantled.

The main building carries the name South Coast Steam Limited with an outline of a Merchant Navy loco underneath. I had a quick word with the owner (Barry Gamble) who is not too keen on people visiting the site, due to insurance conditions, but is quite happy for photos to be taken from outside the site.

RECENT EVENTS AT CHINNOR



0-6-0PT 9682 passing Bledlow with the returning 10.30 'Mince Pie Special' on 3 January 2005, the first train on the last day of the 2004 operating season on the Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway.

Photo: Tim Edmonds



The Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway last summer paid tribute to the late Eric Samuel who had been a leading light in the Society's early day and spoke to the MDRS.

A Memorial train was operated on 24 July 2004 (*above*) headed by visiting 0-6-0PT 9682 arriving at Chinnor station. The Clayton Class 17 D8568 was bringing up the rear.

At Chinnor station, C&PRR Chairman Don Kaufman (*left*) paid tribute to Eric Samuel on the dedication of a bench given in his memory by the Sports & Social Club of Oxford Instruments, Eric's employer.

Photos: Tim Edmonds

CONTRIBUTING TO THE DONKEY

The *Marlow Donkey* is your Society's magazine and needs your contributions. The Editor welcomes articles of all sorts so if you have a pet subject or have been on a trip recently share it with your fellow members. Articles typed and submitted on disk or by email are preferred but hand written contributions can be accepted (They may take a little longer to appear!) Pictures can be prints, slides or digital images.

Please contact the Editor, address on page 1, for further advice.

Deadline for next issue: 31 July 2005

