

Edition

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The Marlow Donkey

The Magazine of the Marlow & District Railway Society

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The contents of the *Marlow Donkey* represent the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Society

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FRONT COVER PHOTOGRAPHS

Top: 1864 built 0-4-0ST Palmerston on 24th July 1946. Bernard Edmonds (Article page 18).

Bottom: Left photo: 99 2321 on the Bad Doberan main line. Photo: Dave Theobald (Article page 12).

Right photo: Mallet 99 5901 0-4-4-0T. Photo: Dave Theobald (Article page 12).

TIMETABLE

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

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

- Thursday 20 March **RAIL ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION BRANCH** Andy Savage
The RAIB was set up a couple of years ago and modelled on its aviation equivalent. Andy Savage explains its role and how it conducts its investigations into incidents large and small.
- Thursday 17 April **MAIN LINE STEAM 1902-1960** Graham Stacey
Images from the collection of the late Ken Nunn a superb photographer who recorded the railway scene in these islands for more than half a century.
- Thursday 15 May **IDEALS ABOVE ONE'S STATION** Mark Evans
The talk will focus on Railway Stations around the country, large and small, from a social, geographical, economic, and industrial perspective.
- Thursday 19 June **ITALIAN RAILWAYS** Jeremy Harrison
Continuing our look at the European rail scene which began with France last year, tonight the spotlight turns on Italy. *To be confirmed.*
- Thursday 17 July **THE pre-1923 GWR LINES IN THE WEST OF WALES** Martin Connop Price
A welcome return visit by an authority on the railways of West Wales. We are assured of an informative evening.

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

I hope by the time you are reading this we will have had some decent weather in which to enjoy some train watching. As I write it's a bitterly cold winter's morning but bright and sunny, ideal for some steam photography if only there was some to go to see. Several of those well known photographer "names" who have been to show us their work emphasised that the winter was the best time to get those unusually lit shots that impress so much. Unfortunately it also seems to involve getting up at the crack of dawn and standing about in the freezing cold for long periods, neither of which appeal to me that much as I get older.

I had the opportunity to have a look at the refurbished St.Pancras not long after it opened. Having been to a meeting in town, I arrived there mid-afternoon and the "first floor" Eurostar section was eerily devoid of people. I took a coffee overlooking the platforms and there were only a handful of other customers and hardly any passengers to be seen, though downstairs, in what we have learnt from the tv series about the rebuilding, to call the "undercroft", there were a lot of people moving to and fro. To be frank, I have mixed feelings about the place. It is beautifully clean, so you can see a lot of the detail of Barlow's original, but having spent time there in the past (usually trying to cop the odd Peak) I think it's lost an awful lot of its old character and now it feels more like a shopping mall with trains than a real railway station with shops. Of course the bread and butter domestic services don't even make it into the wonderful train shed but instead utilise the temporary terminus built

outside whilst the old station was given its makeover. This has all the architectural merit of your local Tesco and I cannot imagine the 22nd century's equivalent of John Betjeman having any more regard for it than he did for Slough. If you haven't yet had an opportunity to view, then those of you coming to Paris on May 10th will get the chance.

The recent arrival of my latest edition of "Steam Railway" caused more of a stir than usual, as the pictures on the cover and articles within, about the first steaming of the new-build A1 *Tornado*, got me surprisingly excited. I'm sure we have all been watching this project over the years without really expecting it to come to fruition, well not yet, but here we are, on the eve of being able to see a brand new steam loco out on the main line. I know you can do almost anything given enough money but this is a project funded largely by a lot of individual enthusiasts dipping into their hard earned cash and I'm sure many of them will be quite emotional when *Tornado* steams out of Kings Cross or wherever for the first time, something that is not now that far away. I know it's not a GWR loco but you can't help but be impressed, can you. It's a feeling I haven't experienced since that real "mission impossible" 71000 *Duke of Gloucester* was brought back to life all those years ago.

Enjoy your railway activities during the Spring and don't forget our editor is looking for articles from more of you, so please, just put a few words down on paper and send them to Mike.

Tim Speechley

SOCIETY AND LOCAL NEWS

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The old year ended with the traditional Christmas Party. As usual there was a quiz set by Mike Hyde and won this year jointly by Terry Dearling and Martin Sherwood. Thanks to all who worked so hard to make the evening such an enjoyable success.

Mike Hyde also took centre stage at the January meeting when he presented an excellent slide show on the spectacular Guayaquil & Quito line in Ecuador which was the focal point of a Railway Touring Co. trip he led last autumn.

Following the formal business of the Annual General Meeting in February, member Adrian Palmer showed us slides of two destinations in the Far East very few of us have visited, namely Java where he concentrated on the sugar mills, and Japan where there appears to be a surprisingly thriving main line steam scene.

BRIAN HOPKINSON

Members will be shocked and sickened to hear of a savage attack on one of our members, Brian Hopkinson, on Reading West station on Saturday 16th February.

Brian was on the footbridge photographing trains when he was approached by two men, thought to be of Eastern European origin, who forced him to the ground, punched him repeatedly in the face and head and then stole his camera.

Although bleeding badly, Brian made it back to his car but was later hospitalised and transferred to Stoke Mandeville as there were fears for his eyesight. Fortunately this has been saved and Brian was discharged on Thursday 21st although it will be some time before he can get back to normal and resume work.

We are sure all members will want to wish Brian a speedy and full recovery..

This should, regrettably, be a lesson to us all. As they used to say at role call on Hill Street Blues: Let's be careful out there!

NEW MEMBERS

Once again it is a pleasure to welcome two new members to the Society. Doug Hill from Taplow and Mike Page who is another "country" member as he comes from Cambridgeshire - a friend of Dave Theobald's.

NORMAN ASTON-SMITH TROPHY

One of our newer members, Tony Keen, was the clear winner of the Norman Aston-Smith Trophy for the best article in the *Marlow Donkey* last year for his evocative recollections of his Shed-bashing trip to Scotland which appeared in the December issue.

When Tony first brought up the idea he asked if the Editor thought members would be interested. Well Tony, I think you've got your answer!

So, if any others of you have similar memories from your ill-spent youth, get writing! With the 40th Anniversary of the "end" of BR steam this summer we are planning to put together a special issue of member's recollections of the end of steam. Let's hear from you!

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Most of you have now renewed but just a polite reminder to those of you who haven't got around to it yet, that those not renewing by the end of March will be deemed to have lapsed.

Also, a reminder that the AGM agreed to raise the subscriptions for 2009 to £14 for full and £8 for associate membership.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED FOR BREWING

The rota for providing the refreshments worked well last year but now Mike Hyde is still looking for "volunteers" for the coming months. If you are able to assist please contact him - if he doesn't get you first!

ANNIVERSARY DVD

Julian Heard has put together an excellent DVD of the visits to The Beeches, Bletchley and Wembley plus the birthday party at Fawley to mark our anniversary year. If you would like a copy please order directly from Julian - his details are on page 1. He is asking for the princely sum of £2.00 just to cover his duplicating expenses.

MARK'S NEW TITLE

Mark Hopwood duly took up his new post with FGW on 21st January but in a surprise development his title is Performance Director not Route Director High Speed as we had been led to expect. He must surely now has the toughest job in the industry, good luck!

GUN ALERT ON THE DONKEY

It's a further sign of the times. On the morning of Tuesday 8th January a passenger aboard 1P19, the 07.28 Bourne End to Paddington through train thought they spotted a youth with a hand gun on the train and alerted the police. As a result the train was halted for some time at Westbourne Park before being taken ahead to the station where only the front of the leading two car set, 165130, was platformed and surrounded by armed police. The driver informed passengers there would be a delay before they could get off and eventually all were allowed to get off through the front driving cab and searched individually by police. Once empty, the train drew forward and the process was repeated for the trailing three car unit, 165110. It proved to be a false alarm as no gun was found on any passenger or discarded on the train but considerable disruption was caused, it being nearly 09.30 before the last passengers got off – an hour and a quarter after the booked arrival time.

BUS BEHEADED AT COOKHAM

An Arriva bus driver made an expensive mistake in Cookham about 09.30 on Wednesday 16th January whilst operating the 37 route from High Wycombe to Maidenhead. Instead of going up Station Hill, over the level crossing and along Whyteladyes Lane as the route specifies, he turned left into Maidenhead Road and hit the notorious low railway bridge at Cannondown. The result was the bus, Leyland 'Olympian' 5113 G283UMJ, had most of its roof removed. Fortunately, there were only three passengers aboard and all had wisely chosen to sit down-stairs (they probably knew the route!) so there

were no injuries. In fact there are reports that all had "legged it" before the police arrived. The 41 year-old bus driver was reportedly arrested on suspicion of dangerous driving and taken to Maidenhead police station for questioning before being released on bail. One round trip by the 'Donkey' had to be cancelled whilst the bridge was checked. There was found to be only superficial damage.

This is not the first incident of this kind at this location – several high lorries have struck it in the past and it is on Network Rail's register of High Strike Risk bridges.

CHILTERN SALE TO DB CONFIRMED

The sale of Laing Rail, parent company of Chiltern Railways and part owners of London Overground and the new Wrexham Shropshire & Marylebone Railway, to the German rail operator Deutsche Bahn AG (DB) was announced on 21st January. This transaction remains subject to approval from the Department for Transport, Transport for London and the Office of Rail Regulation. The only other bidder in the later stages, Nedrail, pulled out over a week before.

Chiltern Railways will become part of DB Regio AG, the division of Deutsche Bahn responsible for operating regional and local services.

This announcement ends months of speculation and marks Deutsche Bahn's entry into the competitive UK passenger rail market.

DB has confirmed that the trusted Chiltern Railways identity and name will remain unchanged and that Adrian Shooter and his management team will remain in control of the company.

London Overground Rail Operations Ltd is a 50/50 joint venture between Laing Rail and The MTR Corporation of Hong Kong. Launched in November 2007 it runs services on lines previously serviced by Silverlink Metro and from 2010 it will run the refurbished and extended East London Line which will be renamed the East London Railway.

With services due to start in spring 2008, Wrexham, Shropshire and Marylebone Railway Ltd is the UK's newest long distance rail operator. It will run regular services from Wrexham and Shropshire to London Marylebone providing North Wales and Shropshire with a much needed direct link to the Capital.

DB also acquired EWS from Canadian National last year. Laing Rail was put up for sale following the hostile takeover of the John Laing Group but Canadian-based private equity group Henderson in December 2006 since when various divisions of the former Laing group have been sold off.

BEACONSFIELD CAR PARK EXPANSION

Chiltern has commenced its project to increase the capacity of the Beaconsfield station car park by adding a second deck on to the existing structure.

Due to the temporary loss of car park spaces (up to 150 during March) to enable this construction, a park and ride facility will be in operation on weekdays from Monday 11th February to Friday 11th April from the Royal Standard of England Public House in Forty Green, just over a mile from Beaconsfield Station.

During this time, Chiltern's 3 for Free promotion, where a car with three passengers will park for free, will continue to run

www.mdrs.org.uk

AYLESBURY VALE WORK STARTS

Work has started in preparation for Chiltern's service extension to Aylesbury Vale, a new station situated where the old GC-Met Joint line crosses the A41 main road between Aylesbury and Waddesdon. Site clearance at the station site has begun and the first few weekends of 2008 have seen Network Rail relaying the presently freight only track to passenger standards in readiness. At present the only traffic over the route is the Northolt to Calvert Binliners. The station is due to open in 2009.

MORE NEW STOCK FOR CHILTERN

Chiltern are expecting to receive four 2-car class 172 'Turbostar' units in the third quarter of 2009. This is part of an order for eight similar trains for the London Overground franchise. The 172 is a new version of the existing 'Turbostars' and are lighter and have more fuel efficient engines.

CHILTERN LOCO HAULED?

In a surprise move, Chiltern are proposing to re-introduce locomotive-hauled peak hour services on the Joint Line for the first time since 1992. They are shown in the May 2008 timetable but probably won't start being loco-hauled until September. They are:

1H11 07.17 Banbury to Marylebone (arr. 08.38)

1N55 18.33 Marylebone to Bicester North (arr. 19.41)

The bad news is the Up train will pass High Wycombe non-stop, it calls at Bicester North, Haddenham & Thame Parkway, Princes Risborough and Wembley Stadium. The Down train calls at Beaconsfield, High Wycombe, Princes Risborough and Haddenham & Thame Parkway.

Top and tailed 67's will be used but until they start, 165's or 168's will cover.

Given that the penultimate daily Up WSMR service should be passing through High Wycombe about 18.50 or about 13 minutes before 1N55 and that there's usually an evening Binliner through High Wycombe, evenings should get interesting this autumn!

VIRGIN TAKE ON WREXHAM

Virgin Trains announced plans in late February to start running a direct service between Wrexham and Euston via Chester in seemingly direct competition to WSMR.

Super Voyagers will be used for the service which will initially be confined to one morning up and evening down service taking about 2 1/2 hours.

WSMR sources describe it as "unwelcome".

DfT GETS TOUGH WITH FGW

Ruth Kelly put out a statement on 26th February confirming that FGW are in breach of their franchise agreement by virtue of their timekeeping, cancellations and the reporting thereof in the period up to December 2007.

It has also required FGW to provide a Remedial Plan and the operator is proposing to recruit additional drivers, conductors and maintenance staff and lease additional rolling stock. In total £29 million will be spent.

This clearly underlines how serious the situation is and some observers feel this is the last chance for First to retain the franchise. Let's hope Mark can get it turned around quickly.

BOURNE END MODERNISATION

Mike Walker

The revised arrangements at Bourne End were brought into use on Monday 11th February. As predicted, the Electric Key Token is retained between Maidenhead and Bourne End under “No Signaller Token” regulations and the Train Staff is retained for the Bourne End to Marlow section.

Equipment at Bourne End consists of two signals. BE1 is on the end of platform 1 and BE3 outside the station facing trains coming off the bridge. Both are of the Dorman LED type and show both red or yellow aspects and both have fibre optic ‘theatre’ type route indicators each capable of showing two routes. Additionally Stop boards have been provided at the ends of both platforms, that on platform 2 reads “Obtain token before proceeding” and that on platform 1 (attached to the post of BE1) reads “Obtain token or staff before proceeding”. This might appear to be contradictory but BE1 and BE3 are points indicators not running signals. The points have been motorised (with Alstom motors) and retain their former designations of 2A and 2B but the former facing point locks have been removed as locking is now carried out in the point motors. A “Train Ready to Start” (TRS) pushbutton has also been provided in a box next to the mirror on platform 1.

A new hut has been provided to house the token instrument and the pushbutton switch panel that operates the points. This replaces the old hut which was ingloriously dumped in the car park with a “For Sale” sign propped up against it (Any offers?). The old ground frame is still in position but disconnected awaiting recovery. On the up side next to the car park, a new Portacabin type building marked “Bourne End REB” contains all the control equipment. A number of lineside cabinets also stand adjacent to the new control hut.

The method of operation is quite involved. Assume first the standard off-peak one train service with the train standing at Maidenhead. In that case the tokens will all be in the instruments and the Bourne End to Marlow staff will be in its holder in the Bourne End Switch Cabin. Points 2A and 2B will both be in the reverse position, that is to say set for a train arriving from Maidenhead to run into platform 2. BE1 will be showing a red aspect and the indicator will be dark. BE3 will show a yellow aspect and D (for Down) in the route indicator.

At train time the Person-in-Charge at Maidenhead obtains the token as previously from the instrument at the Down end of platform 4/5 with the co-operation of the Slough signaller and hands it to the driver. Removing the token from the instrument allows signal S174 to clear to green (or S172 if the train is starting from platform 4) and the train can now set out for Bourne End. Arriving there, as noted above, BE3 will be displaying yellow+D which confirms to the driver the points are set for platform 1 (the Down platform) and correctly locked. The token is then taken to the Switch Cabin by the Conductor (this arrangement of duties is specified in the Sectional Appendix) and placed in the token instrument and the Slough signaller contacted by telephone. When



New equipment at Bourne End includes the new hut housing the token instrument and points control panel and the associated equipment cabinets [Top] alongside the now redundant ground frame. The two "signals", actually points indicators as explained in the text, are BE1 on platform 1 [Above left] and BE3 on the approach to the station from the bridge [Above right].

all photos: Mike Walker

the signaller sees that the token is correctly in the instrument he releases the points allowing the conductor to operate them. As this happens the aspect on BE3 actually goes out but the D indication remains lit as the point motors unlock. As the points move, BE3 shows red with no indication and then as the points lock the aspect again goes out but U (for Up) appears in the indicator and once locked the aspect on BE3 returns to yellow. The interlocking now releases the staff for the Marlow section which the conductor removes, confirms this with the signaller, and returns to the train having locked the switch cabin door of course. BE1 is still showing red only. It does not clear until the conductor presses the TRS button whereupon it clears to yellow+B (Branch). Being in possession of the staff the driver may pass the Stop board and continue to Marlow.

Returning from Marlow the process is repeated in reverse. Note that both token and staff must be “in” at the switch cabin before the points controls can be released.

The Marlow Donkey

For the train to proceed to Maidenhead BE1 shows yellow+M (Main not Maidenhead) once the TRS has been pushed and provided the token has been released by the Slough signaller, taken out by the conductor and given to the driver, he may again pass the Stop board. Note that whilst the train is standing in platform 1 and departing to Maidenhead, BE3 will be showing a yellow aspect not red as one would normally expect. However it must be remembered that these are points indicators only. As the train leaves Bourne End in either direction, BE1 restores to red as soon as the train clears points 2A detected by a local track circuit. On arrival at Maidenhead the token is surrendered to the PIC as before and returned to the instrument.

When the peak hour two-train service starts, the first train runs to Bourne End and surrenders the token, changes the points and collects the staff as above and commences its shuttle operation to Marlow. With the Maidenhead – Bourne End token secured in the Bourne End instrument the signaller at Slough can release another token to the PIC at Maidenhead to authorise the second train to set out for Bourne End. This enters Bourne End past BE3 displaying yellow+U and runs into platform 2 as points 2A/B are locked “normal”. The driver then returns the token to the Bourne End instrument – the auxiliary token instrument is retained on the down end of platform 2 to avoid the long walk round to the switch cabin during the short turn rounds. Even though the train is basically just running between Maidenhead and Bourne End the token has to be surrendered and retaken at each turn around because of the interlocking of the signals at Maidenhead.

The new system seems somewhat over complicated as it will do very little to enhance performance or reliability of the Donkey in operation. Previous problems have largely been cancellation of the service between Bourne End and Marlow because FGW haven't had a conductor available for the train. With that crew member still responsible for

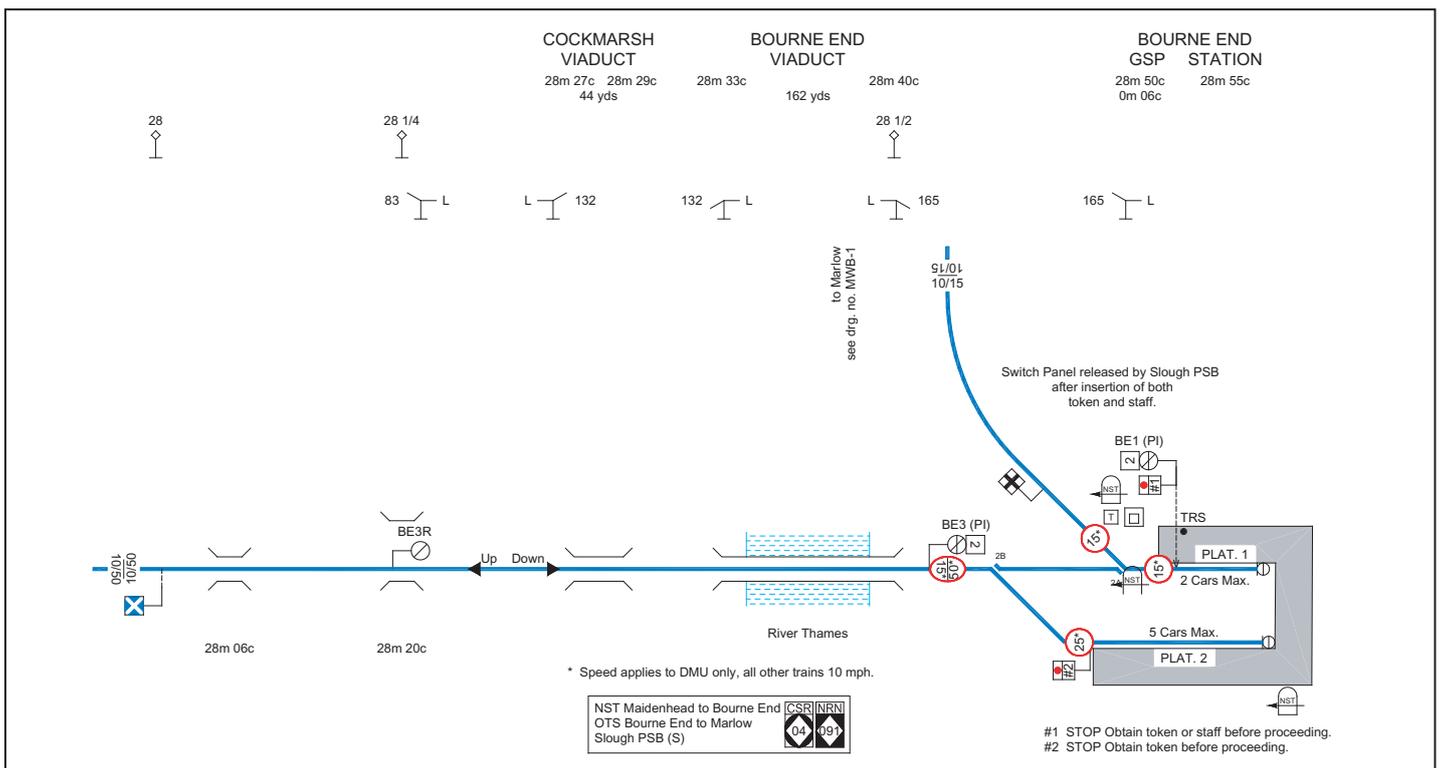
token/staff handling at Bourne End nothing changes. System failures were quite rare and nearly always affected the token system – no one can remember a problem occurring with the ground frame and mechanical pointwork. It may be that the ageing cabling between Maidenhead and Bourne End has been renewed, if not it's only a matter of time before it fails again. Indeed it seems it did just that at the start of the off peak service on the Monday morning when the token couldn't be released. There were further problems on the Tuesday but by Wednesday all seemed to be working properly. A FGW driver-instructor was accompanying the train to ensure the train crews understand the new system.



As the train arrives from Maidenhead, BE3 is showing yellow and D [Left] but this changes to U [Right] when the points are set normal and the train leaves for Marlow.



BE1 shows yellow and B [Left] for Marlow and yellow and M [Right] to run to Maidenhead.



Railways in Australia - a holiday scrapbook

Tim Edmonds

In July and August 2007 I visited Australia for the first time. This was a family holiday built around visits to my sister and some old friends but which took in lots of sightseeing including, whenever convenient, places of railway interest. After a few days in Sydney (New South Wales) and a short tourist package to Ayers Rock and Alice Springs (Northern Territory), we headed for Geelong (Victoria) to visit my sister for a week before making for Adelaide (South Australia) to stay with my friends.

Because the distances involved are so vast, all long-distance travel was by air with one exception - we took the 'The Overland' train for the journey from Geelong to Adelaide. For local travel we used a mixture of car, bus, tram, modern train, preserved train, monorail and ferry - a pretty good cross-section of Australian transport. This article is neither a travelogue nor a comprehensive description; rather it is intended as a scrapbook of some of what I experienced of railways in Australia.

Gauges

Foremost among the complexities of Australian railway history is 'the gauge problem'. The railway systems in the individual states developed separately and three main gauges were used: 3ft 6in (narrow), 4ft 8½in (standard) and 5ft 3in (broad). Gradually the standard gauge has been extended by conversion and new construction to eliminate the problems of through traffic, but there are still some significant narrow and broad gauge systems in existence, including mixed gauge operations. The route of 'The Overland' from Melbourne to Adelaide was converted from broad to standard gauge in 1995, but the suburban railway networks and many local freight lines in both cities are broad gauge. In Adelaide there are two quite separate passenger stations - the suburban lines all use the city centre terminus, but the standard gauge station is farther out at Keswick.



North Shore Geelong, [left] where the standard gauge to Adelaide and a broad gauge freight line diverge from the broad gauge Melbourne - Geelong - Warrnambool line. 9th August 2007.



Mixed broad, standard and narrow gauge track at the National Railway Museum, Port Adelaide [right]. The loco is a SAR 500 class Bo-Bo diesel built in 1966 and in standard gauge form, but these were convertibles used on both broad and standard gauges. 15th August 2007.

all photos: Tim Edmonds

However, in Melbourne the standard gauge runs with the broad gauge from North Shore Geelong right into Southern Cross station, which is also used by the standard gauge trains to Sydney. All three gauges can be seen at the National Railway Museum at Port Adelaide and I came

across the legacy of the break-of-gauge days in several places in South Australia such as Terowie, once a major railway interchange where the broad met the narrow, and Peterborough, which was for a short time served by all three gauges



A Sydney suburban double-decker calls at Circular Quay, the only surface station on the City Circle, with a service for East Hills via the airport. on 27th July 2007.

Suburban and rapid transit

For local transport, the three major cities that I visited presented an interesting contrast, but it was notable that none had a tube network. Sydney is served by the CityRail network of standard gauge electric suburban lines, operated (as far as I could see) entirely by double-deck units. Some trains terminate in a complete or partial circuit of the sub-surface City Circle which gives good access to the central area, including interchange with buses and ferries at Circular Quay, while other services cross the harbour bridge to the North Shore lines or terminate at Central station. One line serves the airport but there are some surprising gaps in the network - notably Bondi Beach, which is reached by bus either from Bondi Junction station or direct from the city. The redeveloped Darling Harbour area is linked to the main shopping centres by a monorail, which connects with a modern tram line from Central station to other parts of the former docklands. The entire original tram network has disappeared.



Sydney monorail train leaving Paddy's Markets station on 28th July 2007. All trains run in a clockwise direction round the circular route - the tram line runs at a lower level in the background.

Melbourne vintage tram working the City Circle route on 6th August 2007 - the clock tower in the background is Flinders Street station.



What Sydney lacks in trams is more than made up for by Melbourne. The city has an extensive and thriving network with much street running, including a circular route round the city centre operated by historic cars. In many parts of the central area the sound of the city is the sound of its trams. The electric suburban railway system is broad gauge and the trains are not double-deckers. They use www.mdrs.org.uk

platforms at both the modern RIBA award-winning Southern Cross station (formerly Spencer Street) and the historic Flinders Street station (where some trains terminate) but since the 1980s many trains also use the sub-surface loop City Loop with stations at Flagstaff, Melbourne Central and Parliament. You have to be careful, however, as trains operate in one or both directions, depending

on the day of the week, time of day and line! A visit to Brighton Beach, on the busy line to Sandringham, meant that I was able to witness in action the last manually-operated level crossing gates on a non-preserved railway in Australia. However, the highlight for me was the diesel-operated outer suburban line from Melbourne to Geelong. Although modern Bombardier 160 DMUs now operate many services, there is a significant number of trains which comprise four-coach sets hauled by big 1980s diesel power, mainly N class (all of which are named) but shared with a few surviving A class with classic Deltic-style bonnets - these are rebuilds of the 1950s B class.

Adelaide is a smaller city and the suburban railways there have quite a different character. All are broad gauge and the entire system is operated by modern DMUs. The network is not extensive and is operated as four lines, two with branches, radiating from Adelaide station and serving mainly the lowland between the city and the coast - only the Belair line to the south climbs into the inland hills. In addition there is one tram route linking the coastal resort of Glenelg with the city centre. The Glenelg Tram has an unusual history, having started life as a broad gauge railway



Bearing the familiar name and logo of Connex, a Siemens EMU heads for Flinders Street on the complex of lines between the Melbourne Cricket Ground and the Rod Laver Arena on 6th August 2007



At Melbourne's Southern Cross station, N470 'City of Warrnambool' waits to depart with the 18.09 to Geelong also on 6th August 2007. The 2510hp Co-Co was built by Clyde-GM in 1987.

before being converted to a standard gauge tramway in 1929. It is now the last-surviving part of Adelaide's tram network and has recently been upgraded to a light-rail system operated by a fleet of modern Bombardier articulated cars. There is street running in Glenelg and in the centre of Adelaide, where an extension to the broad gauge station and beyond was being completed when I was there (it opened in October). Finally, there is the O-Bahn - not a railway, but a guided busway serving the north east suburbs.

To be continued . . .

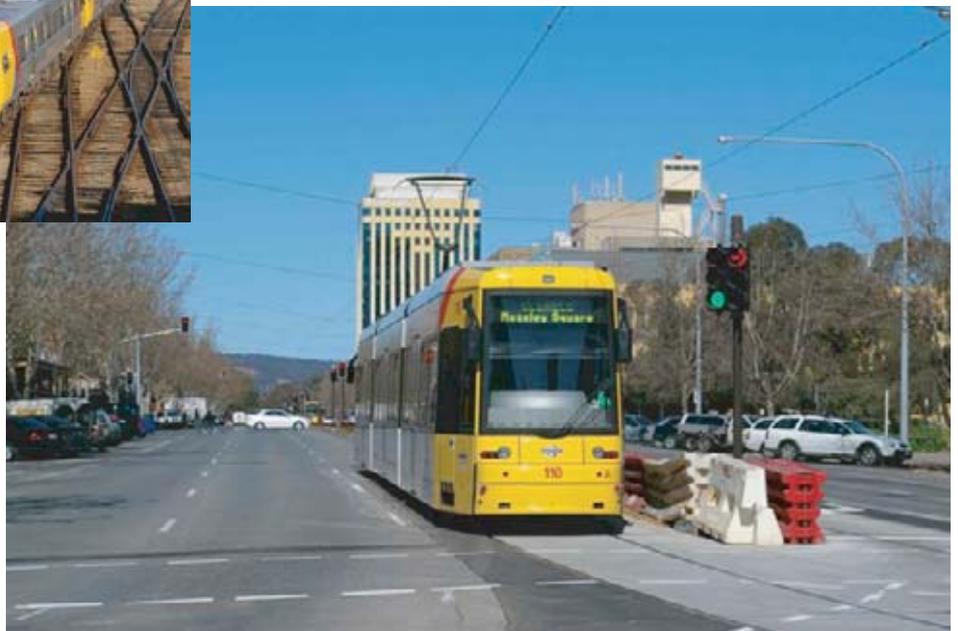


The 08.45 South Geelong - Melbourne arriving at Geelong on 7th August 2007 behind A70, a 1985 rebuild of B70, which was one of Victoria's first main line diesels dating from 1953. They were also products of Clyde-GM and were originally 1630hp. Upon rebuilding they were upgraded to the same specification as the N class. Members of a "certain age" may recall that Triang made a model of these classic locomotives in the early 1960's.



A 3100 class 2-car DMU leaves and a pair of 3000 class DMU's arrive at Adelaide's broad gauge terminus, seen [above] from the Morphett Bridge at the throat of the station on 14th August 2007.

Bombardier 'Flexity' articulated tram 110 heads towards Glenelg from Victoria Square, Adelaide, [right] on one of the two street sections of the Glenelg Tramway on the same day.



BIRTH OF A RAILWAY

Mike Walker

wrexham &
shropshire

By the time this issue is published, final preparations should be in hand for the launch of the Wrexham Shropshire & Marylebone Railway (WSMR), Britain's third "open access" passenger operation which will bring long distance loco-hauled trains back to the Joint Line and Marylebone for the first time in more than forty years.

The idea came from Renaissance Trains who having successfully launched Hull Trains in 2000 were looking for another niche market to tap. Shropshire seemed an ideal candidate as one of only two English counties (tiny Rutland is the other) without direct rail services to the capital since Virgin pulled out of Shrewsbury in 2000. North east Wales had gone even longer without direct services, the last having ceased in the 1960's, a situation the new Welsh Assembly was keen to rectify.

Renaissance Trains therefore started to plan a Wrexham to London service. Knowing that Virgin had a clause in its franchise protecting it from competition until 2012, they realised they would be unlikely to get permission to operate over the WCML into Euston and so looked to Marylebone as a possible alternative. But, how would Chiltern Railways react?

Renaissance Trains set up a meeting with Adrian Shooter, outlined their proposal and, boldly, attempted to get him on side by offering Laing Rail a share in a joint venture. Adrian took up the offer and a 50-50 partnership was agreed upon and initial planning and discussions with interested parties such as local authorities and Network Rail commenced.

From the start the question of equipment was addressed. DMU's, either refurbished class 158's or 170's (either new or possibly ex-MML) were considered but it was felt that they were not really suitable for such a long route. Additionally, large numbers of good Mk3 vehicles had been taken out of service by Virgin and were looking for new work whilst EWS were anxious to secure additional work for their expensive but under utilised class

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67's. It was therefore decided to operate trains of Mk3's push-pull with class 67's.

To prove the practicality of this, a special train formed of the EWS Executive Train worked by 67029 was successfully run over the proposed route from Marylebone to Wrexham and back on 11th October 2006.

Six days later the Wrexham Shropshire & Marylebone Railway Company was formally registered with four directors, two, Adrian Shooter (Chairman) and Andy Hamilton (Managing) from Laing and John Nelson and Mike Jones from Renaissance. However during the start up stages the fledgling company drew heavily on the resources of Chiltern.

On 1st December 2006 WSMR placed a formal application with the Office of Rail Regulation for an operating licence in accordance with Section 17 of the Railways Act of 1993. It hoped approval would be quickly given with a view to starting services in mid-2007.

However it was not to be. Arriva objected that the service might adversely affect their own time-keeping - which is any case notoriously bad - whilst Virgin used their anti-competition clause to block WSMR from using Wolverhampton and Birmingham New Street stations. In view of this

67017 Arrow leads the first WSMR southern training train at High oycombe on 22nd February 2007.

photo: Tim Edmonds

the ORR rejected WSMR's application in February 2007.

WSMR's response was swift. It proposed routing its trains via Bescot and the Grand Junction lines with a stop at Tame Bridge Parkway station. Located near the M5-M6 interchange and with plenty of parking, this had opened in 1990 and usually only hosts New St. to Walsall services. Wolverhampton would be used only to set down southbound and pick up northbound. Based on this and with a few other minor changes a revised application was made to the ORR on 5th March.

Meantime there was another setback. WSMR had proposed Wrexham as its operating base and had sought a £900,000 grant from the Welsh Assembly to finance it. After some deliberation the Assembly said it could not provide such funds. WSMR in response said its base would therefore be in the existing sidings at Shrewsbury and only three round trips a day, not five, would serve Wrexham. Remarkably, the Assembly suddenly realised it could make funding available after all!

Through the summer of 2007 detail

planning continued in expectation of the ORR's approval. But the awarding of the West Midlands franchise, whose winner had to be consulted, produced frustrating delays. Finally on 31st August Andy Hamilton received the letter he had been waiting for - the signal had just turned green.

A further test train to prove the proposed timetable was run on 13th June 2007 again using 67029 but this time topped-and-tailed with 'Royal' 67006. This was followed by the purchase of sufficient rolling stock from storage at Long Marston. This included eight Mk3 standard opens, four Mk3 Restaurant Firsts and four class 82/1 DVT's. This deal was done in advance of ORR approval as interest in the Mk3's was growing and it was a case of buying when available. This was enough to make up four trains and subsequently a further set was secured.

Recruitment of train operating staff, drivers and train managers took place in the late summer of 2007 but although offered jobs they did not take up employment until February this year.

The delay in obtaining ORR approval robbed the company of its plans to commence services with the December timetable change so a revised target became the 19th May 2008 summer timetable change.

By October, the stock started to be moved from storage to EWS-Axiom in Stoke-on-Trent for refurbishing. The Standard class vehicles would receive general overhauls and new interiors featuring seats grouped around tables and all with a window view - just like the good old days! The Restaurant Firsts would receive more work including reducing the size of the kitchen to increase the seating capacity from 24 to 32 and allow space for a disabled toilet.

The DVT's would be modified. When on the West Coast they used TDM (Time Division Multiplex) control to operate with the electric locos. With the exception of 67029 and the two Royal locos, none of the 67's is so fitted. So rather than fit the dedicated fleet of 67's which EWS were going to allocate to WSMR with TDM it was decided instead to convert the DVT's to the AAR MU system used on all the GM built locos. Not only was this seen as more reliable than the TDM system, but it also meant that in the event of one of the WSMR 67's being unavailable for any reason, any of the other 26 class 67's could be substituted.

Finally all the stock and the dedicated locomotives were to be repainted in WSMR's distinctive livery of silver and gunmetal grey.

As autumn turned to winter the level of activity ramped up significantly. Among the biggest undertakings was the preparation of route diagrams and risk assessments for use by the drivers and train managers when learning the road. The former was commissioned from your Editor whilst specialist consultants RPD prepared the latter.

With the start of the new year came formal planning approval from Wrexham Council for the alterations to Wrexham General station to provide train crew accommodation and stores facilities, whilst the Welsh Assembly finally provided its promised funding to permit Network Rail to start upgrading the long disused bay sidings at the south end of the station to provide an overnight stabling and servicing facility. WSMR also signed its track access agreement on 18th January.

The beginning of February saw the 13 drivers join the company. All are long serving men from Arriva, Chiltern, EWS, Freightliner, First Capital Connect, Southern and South West Trains but all needed to learn how to handle a class 67 and the route. Training runs started in mid-February using both the EWS Executive train and a set of Cargo D Mk3's topped and tailed with 67's. Two weeks behind the drivers, the Train Managers joined, most from outside the industry.

When services begin, hopefully on 19th May, there will be five trips each way Monday to Friday, four on Saturday and three on Sunday. Two

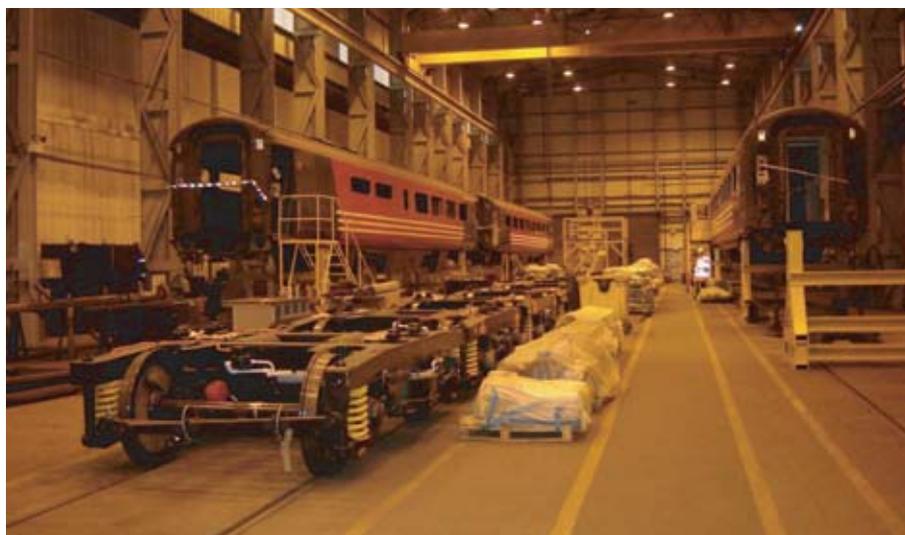
sets will stable overnight at Wrexham and one at Chiltern's Wembley depot. The fourth will be at EWS Crewe either for maintenance or in reserve. The sets will rotate daily through the diagrams and all trains should operate with the locomotive at the London end.

Stops will be made at Ruabon, Chirk, Gobowen, Shrewsbury, Wellington, Telford Central, Cosford and Tame Bridge Parkway although some trains may miss one or two. Wolverhampton and Banbury will be set down points for up trains and pick ups for down services. Between Wolverhampton and Leamington most trains will operate via Coventry, Stechford, Aston and Bescot but a small number will run via Tyseley, New Street and the Soho Loop whilst on Sundays trains will operate via Coventry, Stechford, New Street and the Soho Loop. A limited operation will also take the Stour Valley line direct between New Street and Wolverhampton. WSMR drivers will also "sign" several other diversionary routes.

To avoid the embarrassing delays that have dogged another Open Access operator's debut, a number of contingency plans are in place - just in case.

Long term plans call for an increase in frequency to two-hourly probably from December 2009 and even expansion onto other routes - plans that are for obvious reasons, secret for now.

WSMR is a bold concept and promises to bring a reliable, high class and above all, affordable rail service to a long neglected part of the country. We wish them every success.



Four of WSMR's ex-Virgin Mk3's are gutted for refurbishment in EWS-Axiom's former Marcroft works at Stoke-on-Trent on 15th February 2007.

photo: WSMR Mark Edlington

HISJING GERMAN SUNNY STRIES

Dave Theobald & Mike Page



Occasionally, the *Railway Magazine* and *Steam Railway* magazines, among others, carry advertisements for excursions on the narrow gauge mountain railways in Germany's Harz Mountains - or 'Harzgebirge'. Rather than spend hundreds of pounds, we thought we could do just as well, privately. Four of us shared car hire costs; airfare was around £80 return and hotels about £15-25!

The Harz Mountains, containing iron ore and limestone, fed the early iron making activities in the region. The mountains run roughly north-south and once carried the fences dividing East and West Germany from about 1961 to 1989.

Standard and metre gauge railways grew up in the region in the 1870s and 1880s to transport ores and lime, culminating in a purely tourist metre gauge line up the highest mountain in the range, the Brocken. The mountain is prominently higher than its surrounding sisters, about 3766ft (1150m), or some 200ft higher than Mount Snowdon. Unlike the Snowdon rack railway, the 'Trans-Harz Railway' (Harzquer-und Brockenbahn Selketalbahn - HBS) is all adhesion-worked.

With continuous grades of 1 in 30, today's trains use very impressive 1954-built, 60-tonne 2-10-2Ts, which exert around 700 brake horsepower to heave eight/nine coaches from about 200ft above sea level in Wernigerode (eastern Germany) to the summit.

Standing on the station at Wernigerode you can see the top of the Brocken about 10 miles away, and wonder how the train gets up
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there. After some 33km (20 miles) of track and nearly three hours of solid 'thrash' with a class '99.92', coal-burning 2-10-2T - sounding as loud as a hard-working 'B1' or 'Black Five', - you gaze down from the summit towards Wernigerode nestled below, and think: "So that's how the train gets up here!"

From August 1961 until July 1992, this trip was not possible. The 'Cold War' had stepped up and the Russians had already within their grasp a superb outlook over this part of East and West Germany. On a clear day, you can see Hannover, over 60 miles away and keep one's eyes on the West's troop movements, as well as watching the local East Germans

In clearing the Brocken summit, the Russians razed to the ground a 19th Century hotel, the remains of a medieval castle and what was thought to be the remains of a stone circle. Up went radar towers and a massive nine-storey surveillance block. The Brocken line became 'off-limits' as did much of the Harz area - even East Germans needed special permits to live in or travel to the region. Odd sections were severed, including the HBS metre gauge routes into West Germany.

Once the Russians had pulled out in 1990, the Brocken line was renewed in 1991, and reopened for business in July 1992. The whole of the line to Nordhausen was reinstated and joined up with severed branches to Hasselfelde, a 36km branch to Gernrode and a short branch to the quaint medieval town of Harzgerode.

Last year, the 10km standard gauge

Two views of class 99 2-10-2T's at the summit of the Brocken.

all photos: Dave Theobald

line from Gernrode to the main DB line at Quedlinburg was converted to metre gauge for HBS trains.

Why make trains climb the Brocken? The mountain had always been associated with ancient, odd 'goings-on', demons and witchcraft. German writer, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, in the 18th Century, expanded the legend of 'Walpurgisnacht' (Saint Walpurger's night). May 1, on which all the witches gathered at the summit for a 'knees up' with the devil and his cronies. A strange block of granite, called the 'Witches' Altar' survives. Indeed there are some very strangely shaped pieces of granite lying all over the place!

So legends, coupled with really impressive landscape views, mulled wine, hot soups, local beer and sausages make the Brocken a major tourist and hikers' attraction, and in winter, a skiers' venue. The ex-Russian surveillance tower is now a very modestly priced hotel with every room having a superb view.

To get the tourists up there, the German Jung locomotive factory produced a number of 0-4-4-0 mallet tank locos (class 99.59) - exerting about 400 DHP - in 1897. These were sufficient for about 4/5 coaches through to 1931, when Henschel produced the '99.2' 2-10-2Ts.

After World War II, the line was reopened by the DR (Deutsche Reichsbahn - German State Railway) in 1949 and declared a 'National Monument' in 1972.

Getting There

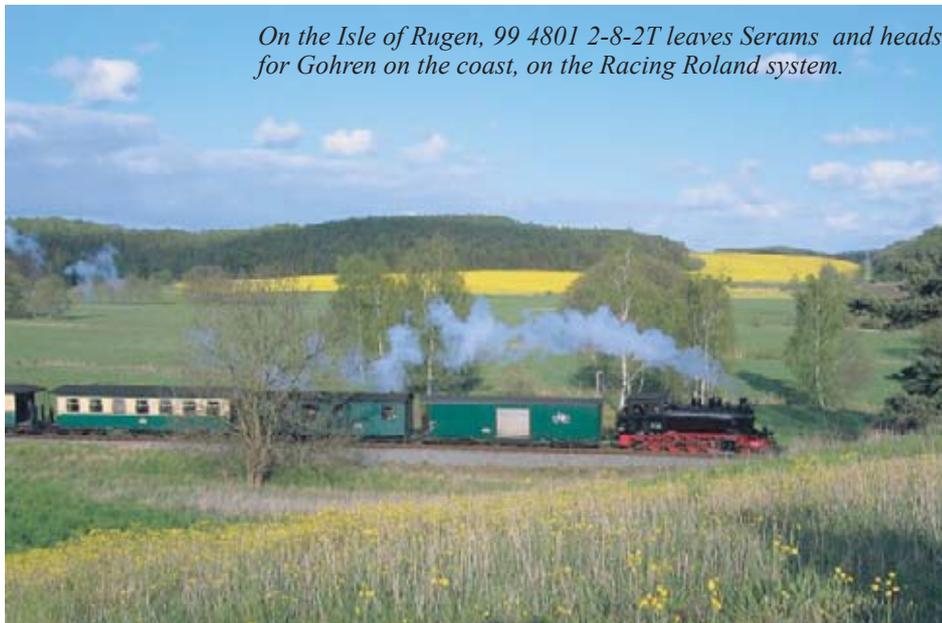
On 2nd May 2007, Marlow Club members Dave Theobald and Peter Greatorex teamed up with Mike Page and Peter Heath at Stansted for a Ryanair flight to Altenburg (near Chemnitz) to pick up a hire car and seek out a 'Pension' (B & B) in the Harz area.

We aimed for the area near Drei Annen Hohne where the Brocken line diverges away from the main metre-gauge line Wernigerode - Nordhausen (a line 60.3km or about 40 miles long).

We found the 'Haus Barenberg' in Schierke, for B & B ranging from EUR 25-50/night (£15-30) and within easy reach of the Brocken line (Schierke station) and the Nordhausen line (Elend station).

We had learnt that weekend that there were to be two mallets working on a special, and a second special from, I think, Gernrode, with an 'unknown' loco.

One important point, the HBS operates a service, on all lines, all the year round. The Brocken line is 100% steam. There is also at least one steam train, each way, each day, on the other lines in among a variety of diesel railcars. For the light railway folks - you can travel by diesel/electric tram between Ilfeld and Nordhausen. These vehicles run as diesel electrics until reaching the tram system in Nordhausen, where the diesel is shut off and the pantograph raised - beats any guided bus!



On the Isle of Rugen, 99 4801 2-8-2T leaves Serams and heads for Gohren on the coast, on the Racing Roland system.

On Thursday, May 3, we made the pilgrimage to the Brocken, riding on the open platform ends of the first train up from Wernigerode at Drei Annen Hohne. You get about 50 minutes of 'all-out slog' at a respectable 25-30mph to reach Schierke, where the 1 in 30 starts again at the station throat for another 30 minutes! The locomotives are in impeccable condition and steam-tight. It is some while before the pine forests start to thin out and you get tantalising glimpses of deep valleys. In climbing the last 1000ft or so, the line makes a complete circuit spiral to reach the summit.

It is not an easy line to photograph. We tramped about 2 miles along the trackside to find 'open' shots, only to realise we had gradually descended

nearly 800ft and now faced a steep climb back up!

A nice surprise was the arrival of one of the first series 2-10-2Ts (99.2), the 99.222, which climbed up on a normal train.

We returned to Drei Annen Hohne to take shots around there, then joined the afternoon return steam train to Nordhausen, with the 99.222. The line was mostly downhill, with some short curving uphill stretches of 1 in 30 and 1 in 40. Rather than risk a 4 min change at Nordhausen (the steam train arrived in the HBS station, but the return diesel left from the station square) we changed at Nordhausen-Attentor for the return railcar.

The Haus Barenberg' did not do dinner, so we went, now rather late for the Germans, to the hotel lower down the hill. They served us, except this and that were missing off the menu (like Mike's favourite - Apple Strudel!).

Next day was the day of the specials, and sure enough, at Drei Annen Hohe, an 1897 0-4-4-0 mallet tank, the 99.5901, appeared with a diesel unit banker (not the second mallet as originally advertised). Afterwards, we went to Eland to await a seemingly fictitious special, while watching pipe-jacking in progress under the level crossing.

We returned to Drei Annen Hohe to see the mallet depart and caught it up at Schierke. After photographing the mallet's departure, we had another ride up to the Brocken. At the top, while lounging around, looking at the mallet and having a drink, we heard a



2-8-2T 99 2321 passes our hotel as it threads its way down Bab Doberan High Street on its hourly service along the Baltic Coast



HBS Traditionszug hauled by 100 year old Mallet 99 5901 0-4-4-0T begins the steep climb to the top of the Brocken.

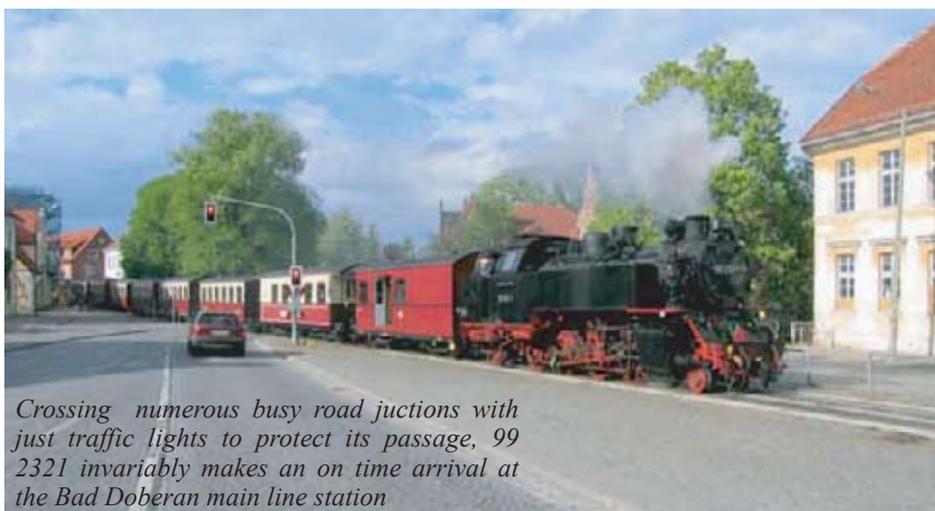
different exhaust sound climbing up the spiral. This time it was the other, short special, headed by a delightful, very compact and sturdy 0-6-0T, the 99.6102. So, for a while, we had two, quite uncommon metre gauge locos side-by-side.

The following day, we bought a Saxony day runabout ticket at EUR 28 (say £18), except, up to five people can share it! So for four of us, it was EUR 7 each - about £4.50p - to cover an area the size of East Anglia and more. So we did a round trip from Halberstadt to Leipzig via Halle, a look at the magnificently restored Leipzig Hauptbahnhof (main station), then to Magdeburg and back to Halberstadt - over 350km (say 210 miles) - for under £5 each!

Next day, Mike left the group to travel via the HSB to Nordhausen and on to Stuttgart. The remaining

three of us had all day to cover 300km to Bad Doberan, near Rostock on the Baltic Coast. This is where the narrow gauge steam hauled Mollibahn system is located. For the last 120 years this intensely worked 20km line has connected the coastal resorts of Kuhlungsborn and Heiligendamm with the main railway system at Bad Doberan. Every half hour, a 2-8-2 tank loco from each direction, (8:30 to 18:30) hauls an 8 coach train through the narrow streets of Bad Doberan. It crosses busy road junctions, passes close by shop door ways and bustles down some very narrow streets. Of course the locals don't even turn a hair; however it impressed us so much that we found a B&B that overlooked the narrowest point of incredible street running.

The next day was bright and we were woken up early (6:30am) by the noise of steam haulage passing right



Crossing numerous busy road junctions with just traffic lights to protect its passage, 99 2321 invariably makes an on time arrival at the Bad Doberan main line station

past our window. Instead of a bus - as shown on the time table - it had been replaced by a train. I can't see that happening back home!

After a wonderful breakfast and masses of great coffee we are set up for a day exploring this 900mm gauge route to two very exclusive seaside resorts. Some good line side locations and well patronised trains passing frequently made photography easy. There is a very comprehensive rail museum and cafe at the end of the line, where we sheltered from a brief downpour. Time for more great coffee! If Heiligendamm sounds familiar, it was in the headlines when protesters tried to disrupt the G8 summit recently. We noted the various compounds being constructed but thought it was a reunion of old border guards trying to relive the bad old days! We had a couple of days here and had time to ride the train as well take pictures of immaculate engines.

The last steam hauled narrow gauge line on the itinerary was "The Racing Roland" system at the eastern end of the Isle of Ruegen some 250km drive away. No problem in Germany, roads are superior to the UK, there is less traffic and some motorways have unlimited speed limit. Well it is a hire car! We find digs in Binz on the coast. This is just south of a former Nazi Holiday Hotel at Prora. Built during the 30s it could accommodate 20,000, with a further 5,000 employees - all in one great long building over looking the Baltic.

This railway is not so intensely worked but still is fully integrated with main line trains and local buses. At our time of visit they run a two hourly service between Putbus and Goehren, through the rolling countryside almost in sight of the sea at Binz. This 750mm has a 100 year history and is around 17kms. The earliest loco we saw dated from the first war but our train engine was built by LKM in 1953 and subsequently rebuilt more recently at Meiningen Works. We travelled standing on the open balcony of the coach so we could hear the loco tackle some of the steep climbs on route. At Goehren PG and I must have made Mike's ears burn when we recounted the tale of being stranded

Continued on page 19

THE PARIS METRO SYSTEM (RATP)

MALCOLM MARGETTS

It is interesting to make comparisons between the transport systems of France and those of the UK. For example, the first canals were being built in France 150 years before similar schemes were being introduced here in the 1770's. Yet despite this delay, we failed to generally adopt the larger lock dimensions found on the continent, and saddled ourselves with narrow boats and contour-following routes that, within a few years, would render our waterways uncompetitive with the new steam railway.

We levelled the Anglo-French score fifty years later, when we led the world with our first main line opened in 1830. We were also thirty-five years ahead with an underground system in our capital city - it was 1900 before the Paris Metro service started. However, within a decade the inner area of Paris was covered with a labyrinth of routes to most areas.

With the Society making a trip to Paris in May, it seems appropriate to focus on some of the more interesting aspects of the Metro network and with time being limited on the day, these notes may help members make the most of the visit:-

□ Opened in 1900, two competing private companies (CMP and NS) grew rapidly and by 1913 the network within central Paris broadly resembled the system we find today. In the 1920's two lines were added, and a further one in 1935. The 13 line system then remained unchanged at its heart until line 14 was added with driverless trains in 1998.

□ As Paris grew in size, nearly all of the 13 lines were extended into the suburbs, often by several separate extensions and several changes were made to each line. Sections of one line were added to another to best serve a growing 20th century city and in 1930 the two companies were amalgamated to provide a city wide system.

□ All the underground parts of the system are just below the surface and generally follow the road network. Most underground construction was by cut and cover, but several sections of tunnels were used, and tunnels exist at several points under the Seine, and where lines interweave past each other. Almost every extension in the suburbs has been and continues to be built, by cut and cover. Because most construction was just below the surface, station areas and platforms are of generous proportions and at frequent intervals.

□ From the onset, trains operated on the RH track, unlike much of SNCF in northern France which operates on the left. Initially, power was delivered at 600V later to be increased to 750V. The gauge is 1435mm but the track has been eased over the years to 1445mm (4' 8.875"). Stock can be delivered and returned to the SNCF network, but the loading gauge prohibits movement of SNCF stock on the Metro network.

□ Separate from the Metro is a SNCF regional express 1500V system (RER). This operates five through lines (A to E) and might be considered similar to Thameslink.

Some of these lines have a loading gauge which allows double deck trains into the city centre. This system has less frequent stops and is complementary rather than competitive with the Metro. These lines are excluded from this survey simply to ease presentation for the one day visitor.

□ There is also a tram system with four remote lines T1, T2, T3 and T4, all introduced over the past fifteen years. In France there are currently over twenty separate tram systems planned or being built - the government being very supportive of these schemes. Several more are planned for Paris

□ With the building of each line, underground anti-clockwise terminal loops of 30m radii were constructed to turn the trains. Many of these have long since been abandoned or used for stock storage as the lines expanded, but some are retained.

□ Two lines in the north east of the city include a self contained branch. - Lines 3 bis and 7 bis (bis means encore).

□ For over ninety years trains included a 1st class section, operational from 9:30 each morning but this was discontinued in 1991.

□ All 14 lines are interconnected, and can be serviced from one point for certain night time duties. The 3rd rail power supply is live 24/7 with line side isolation controls for worker protection.

□ Five lines operate on the pneumatic tyre system, traditional lines 1,4,6 and 11 and the newest line 14. The pneumatic system is preferred, but the change over from steel wheel operation takes several months and is highly disruptive, so only new lines will be built this way in the future.

□ The rubber tyre bogies contain four 1m rubber load carrying wheels inflated to 135psi on the driving axles and 115psi on the trailing axles, guided by four horizontally mounted guide wheels. Tyre pressures are monitored automatically, and punctures are very rare. Each tyre averages 300,000km life. Should a puncture occur the bogie lowers so that the steel wheels engage with the track.

□ The whole network operates 365 days, from 5:30 until 00:30. There is a matrix of train times dependent on the day, the month, and the time of day. Service levels vary from 1m 40sec. on the busiest line at peak times to 10 minutes on the low density lines at quiet times.

□ After the first train of the day, which is manually controlled, most of the system switches to automatic and train times are then controlled to a five second interval for the next 19 hours. Automatic control is mandatory if interval times are less than 2minutes.

□ Lines are primarily identified by number, terminal station names and by line colours. This colour coding is less prominent than that adopted by London Underground.

□ Stations entrances above ground can be identified either by the word Metropolitan where the ornate early 20th century railings are a registered national monument, or more simply "Metro". In recent years a simple "M" has been adopted and even more recently a more modern M for line 14.

□ Several of the lines are very similar, being all underground, and extend well into the suburbs where they remain underground. For the one day visitor these lines should be avoided to concentrate on lines 6 and 14 which are essential viewing. If more time is available, visit the six listed below. If you plan to explore the tram system, line T2 is recommended, it operates fairly close to the centre, and terminates in La Defence district with so much of interest from a late 20th century architectural viewpoint.

To summarise, the essential viewing lines could include:-

Lines 1 4 6 & 11 - One or more of the four traditional rubber tyred lines. Particularly line 11 which climbs over and under existing lines or line 1 where at Bastille station there is a 40m track radius (Mind the gap!)

Line 5 - In the area close to Gare d'Austerlitz

Line 6 - On the left bank close to the centre of the city with over 6 of its 7km length on raised structures reminiscent of the Liverpool Overhead Railway.

Line 14 - The newest and only new line for 60 years. Driverless and with seats to view the track from front or rear, and rubber tyred to boot!

Against a typical Paris skyline [Below], two MP73 trains cross the Seine between Bir Hakeim and Passy stations on Line 6 in November 2006.

One of the pneumatic-tyred MP59 trains [right] on an underground portion of Line 11 in spring 2003.

photos: Paul Jobber SNCF Society

Line diagrams (maps of the system) are freely available at the main line stations, but even the latest version may not show route T4. For those wishing to purchase a plan in advance the Michelin pocket tourist map of Paris Ref 53 is available to order from book shops at £2.49. Alternatively go to www.sncf.co.uk/ website and a pdf map of the Metro can be found, which is very clear when enlarged, but fails to show the latest extension to line 14 in the SE of the city, it also omits the latest tram line T4.

For further reading about the system, Paris Metro Handbook published by Capital Transport (£9.95), author Brian Hardy, is a very readable pocket guide, the most recent edition was published in 1999, much of the information for this article was derived from this source. Your secretary has a copy and would be glad to loan this to members. Additional English language coverage is difficult to find, but interestingly Waterstones has just awarded a 'Best of the Rest' non fiction listing to a book just released (March 2008) titled Metrostop Paris by Geger Dallas.



25 AND 15 YEARS AGO

Tim Edmonds



25 YEARS AGO

The last of the older-style trains on the LT District Line, the "R" stock, was taken out of regular service on 4th March after working an evening journey between High Street Kensington and Ealing Broadway. Introduced in 1949, these trains had been gradually replaced by the new "D" stock. The last set was retained until 15th May, when it worked a special sponsored by LT.

Privatisation of British Transport Hotels reached an advanced stage on 7th March when eight were sold to the Eclipsecare group for £4,600,000. They included the Royal Station Hotel at Newcastle, the Great Northern Hotel at Peterborough and the Manor House Hotel at Moretonhampstead. The sale of the Midland Hotel at Manchester in mid-March left only three remaining for disposal.

The prestigious Dimpleby Lecture on BBC Television was given by Sir Peter Parker, Chairman of British Railways, at the end of March. His subject was "Missing our connections" and was about the relationship between government, industry and democracy. Winner of the BBC TV Mastermind competition for 1983 was Christopher Hughes, a London Underground driver, whose specialist subject in the final was 'British steam locomotives, 1929-1963'.

A class 127 DMU leaves Harpenden station on the St Pancras - Bedford line on 21st May 1983, during the run-down of diesel operation prior to the full introduction of electric services.

The last "R" class trains were withdrawn from service on the District Line in March 1983. One of the class is seen four years earlier on 13th May 1979 at Upminster.

Photos: Tim Edmonds

A revised diesel service was introduced between St Pancras and Bedford from 16th May, with many local trains retimed to connect at Luton and Bedford with a revised main-line service operated mainly by HSTs. To continue to run the local trains in the handover to the electrified services after settlement of the one-man operation dispute, some were operated by loco-hauled sets while certain surviving class 127 DMUs were re-engined with units cannibalised from various parts of the country. EMUs gradually took over all services during the course of the new timetable.





15 YEARS AGO

In his budget speech on 16th March, Chancellor of the Exchequer Norman Lamont indicated the government's interest in two major railway projects, the Channel Tunnel Link and Heathrow Express. Funding was agreed for the Paddington - Heathrow link, but the support for the CTRL depended on various other projects and agreements over routing and the London terminus.

On 20th March the 1906-built, Churchward-designed 'Factory' at Old Oak Common was closed at a special ceremony. The final loco to receive a classified examination there was 47 701 *Old Oak Common Traction & Rolling Stock Depot*, while present on display were 6024 *King Edward I* and D1015 *Western Champion*.

The first passenger trains ran into the new Manchester Airport station on 30th March, when a media preview was given of the new train services on offer from the start of the new timetable on 17th May. First to arrive at the island platform was a three-car class 150 from Blackpool, followed three minutes later by a three-car class 158 from Scarborough. The 2.64km of new line was electrified, with class 323 units providing a shuttle service to and from Piccadilly in addition to the longer-distance diesels.

An overwhelming demand for driver training courses at the Birmingham Railway Museum led to a partnership with the Battlefield Line in Leicestershire to run courses on their line. Consequently 0-6-0PT 7752 moved to Shackerstone in March and was used on courses from April, with Pacific 34027 *Taw Valley* following in May. 7752 was available as motive power for the normal steam services throughout the operating season.

Recently arrived from Tyseley for use on driver training, 7752 leaves Shenton for Shackerstone with a service train on 3rd May 1993 [Right].

On the Festiniog Railway 1864-built 0-4-0STT Palmerston was steamed for the first time since 1939 and returned to service in May 1993. This is the scene at Boston Lodge on 24th July 1946, where the loco was abandoned after a brief period of use as a stationary boiler for the blacksmith's shop.

Photo by Bernard 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: 30th April 2008

STATIONS THAT NEVER WERE

Tim Edmonds

In March last year, on page 4 of Donkey 116, I made an appeal for information under the heading 'A station that never was'; thank you to Alan Costello and Mike Walker for responding. I was looking for references in books or maps to a station on the GW&GC Joint line between Beaconsfield and High Wycombe that I believed had never existed. This was something that had interested me since the publication by OPC in 1983 of a railway atlas that marked a 'Penn Halt' somewhere in the vicinity of Loudwater. I subsequently encountered several further occurrences of this error, plus references to a proposed 'North Loudwater' station at the same location and an estate agent's map showing a 'Loudwater' station on the joint line, rather than on the branch on other side of the valley. A period of 'resting' between job contracts in 2007 gave me the chance to do some detailed research, which has revealed that there are three separate threads to the story - two based on error and one based on fact.

'Penn Halt' was one of many errors in an atlas which was based on sloppy research and poor cartography, and this has been copied as 'fact' by authors who failed to check

its veracity. 'Loudwater' station on the joint line was, I believe, a cartographic error by a graphic design company with no knowledge of railways and whose work was not checked when they supplied the map to a local property developer. There was definitely a 'North Loudwater' station proposed in 1928 - it's in the minutes of the GW&GC Joint Committee in the National Archives - but this was dependent on a large property development that never came to fruition and so the proposal quietly died. However, one of the people that helped me with sources claims that he once saw this station marked on an old road map - which is quite possible since maps often include 'proposed' developments. Alas, extensive enquiries of numerous libraries, record offices and second-hand shops have failed, so far, to locate such a map.

The full story of my explorations along this overgrown siding of local railway history was published in the December 2007 edition of the Journal of the Railway & Canal Historical Society. If any member would like to see a copy of this, then do ask me.

VISITING GERMAN SUNNY SKIES **Concluded from page 14**

here in the depth of winter a couple of years previously. There was a misunderstanding of operation by Mike and we were left by the lineside as the last train of the day made its departure through a blizzard that built up to a serious fall of snow. No problem with this trip - we were enjoying sunshine when back in the UK more rain was falling...

The last day we almost missed a fantastic transport museum because the leaflet was so poor that we thought we were looking at models. On entrée to the Riegen Technical Museum we came face to face with a full size Russian P36 express 4-8-4 locomotive, and fully

streamlined German 03 pacific and so much more. This place was packed with everything from bubble cars to a Mig 21 Jet Fighter. They even had a Dennis Fire Engine from Sheffield. I guess this corner of Germany needs all the indoor entertainment it can get because the weather can be so severe that it is certainly not very tourist friendly for a lot of the year. However we had great fortune with the weather (I have never seen the Brocken so clear). All the plans came together and we saw not only the trains but many other sights as well. Plus the bonus of good German Red Wine!

FROM THE ARCHIVE



Its glory days behind it, 6008 King James II awaits the scrapper's torch at Swindon dump. Built at Swindon in March 1928, it was withdrawn from Stafford Road shed, Wolverhampton in June 1962 and scrapped in November of the same year. Note that the name and number plates are still in place. A large Prairie and a Castle stand behind.

photo: Ken Lawrie