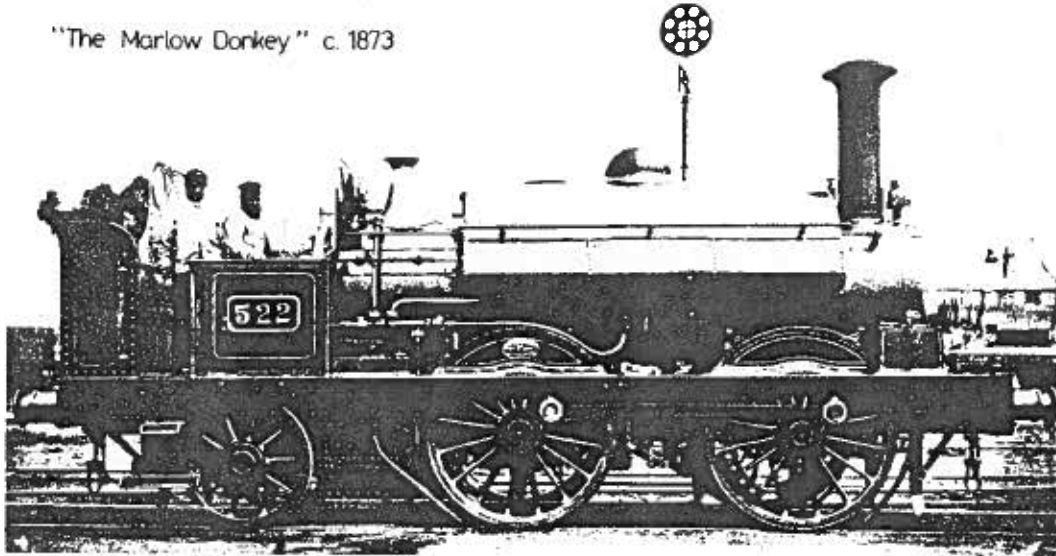


*Marlow & District
Railway Society*

"The Marlow Donkey" c. 1873



**A MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND PROSPEROUS
NEW YEAR**

**To all our
members.**

Marlow & District
Railway Society

THE MARLOW DONKEY NO. 13

DECEMBER 1979

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

For months now we have been reading in our newspapers about public spending cuts. It was therefore hardly surprising when the Guardian "leaked" a second Beeching-type document. Inevitably, perhaps understandably, Mr. Norman Fowler, the Transport Secretary, uttered emphatic denials in the House of Commons. According to the newspaper article the Cabinet have decided to reduce subsidies to BR by £22 million. To compensate for this loss of income Barnstaple, Falmouth and Newquay would lose their rail links. In Wales places affected would include Pembroke Dock, Milford Haven, Llandrindod Wells, Barmouth, Pwllheli, Tenby and Llandello. In East Anglia Lowestoft, Cromer, Sudbury and Saxmundham, in Lincolnshire Skegness, Sleaford, Spalding and Gainsborough would all lose contact with the mains lines. The list continues inexorably, seven lines to be axed in Scotland, nine in the Midlands, six in the North of England. In the Home Counties lines under threat are Aylesbury to Princes Risborough, Bletchley to Bedford, Watford to St. Albans and Ashford to Hastings. It was a relief to find that our Maidenhead-Bourne End-Marlow line was not included.

Remembering the easy promises of the Beeching days that cheaper rural buses could replace torn-up branch lines one contemplates what 41 withdrawn services and the loss of 900 more miles would mean in the lives of country people, especially those who do not possess motor cars.

Five of our members recently visited the winter quarters of the three BR steam engines which, in the summer months, travel up and down the Vale of Rheidol between Aberystwyth and Devil's Bridge. All three locos are 2-6-2 T's, Owain Glyndwr and Llywelyn built at Swindon in 1923, and Prince of Wales built by Davies and Metcalfe of Romiley near Manchester in 1902 when the line was first opened. These smart vererans still climb up to an altitude of 680 ft. above sea-level.

"Forty years on" is the proud cry of Railway World this month. December 1939 seems a strange birthday for this excellent journal. We were at war, albeit the "phoney war" when nothing much seemed to happen, but things warmed up in the following years and RW survived. Railway Magazine also managed to keep alive against great odds. Railway World was called Railways until September 1952. From January 1962 Ian Allan Ltd. became the publishers. This month's copy is No. 476. Long may this first rate magazine continue to appear in our book-shops.

Shortly our Society will have reached its third birthday. The membership list grows monthly. We have had some excellent speakers and a wealth of good films, slides and even practical demonstrations of railway signalling practice. Visits to places of interest in the past three years have taken members to York, Swindon, Cranmore, Amersham, Shrewsbury and the Isle of Wight. Next year a group of members will be present at the Rocket 150 celebrations. If the weather is kinder than it was in January 1979 perhaps our next AGM will be well supported. Ideas for many future visits, talks and activities will be welcomed by your Committee.

THURSDAY NIGHT PROGRAMME FOR 1980 AT 1745 FOR 2000 HRS

- 17 Jan 1980 Third Annual General Meeting. Followed by members' slides.
- 21 Feb 1980 The new Tan-y-Grisiau extension to the Festiniog Railway. Talk with slides by Rob Holton.
- 20 Mar 1980 Track development on British Railways for high speed running. Talk with slides by Harold Jenkins.
- 17 Apr 1980 Adventures in Latin America. Colin Garratt returns for a second visit sponsored by Praktica Cameras.

THIRD ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 17 JANUARY 1980 AT 2000 HRS

The third AGM of the Society will be held at the Marlow Donkey on Thursday 17 January 1980. The members of your committee who will be standing down in accordance with the rules and will be eligible for re-election are, Bas Woodward, Roy Mee and Ted Gregory. Any other paid up member who would like to serve on the committee should send his nomination in writing to the Secretary Roger Bowen not later than 1 January 1980. Should there be more nominations than vacancies an election will be held at the AGM. The new committee will meet after the AGM to elect the Society's officers for 1980. If you have a subject for general discussion please give the Secretary prior notice to that time may be allotted.

The agenda for the meeting is as follows:

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Minutes of the Second AGM held on 25 January 1979.
3. Matters arising.
4. Chairman's Report.
5. Treasurer's Report.
6. Announcement of events in 1980 by the Secretary.
7. Items for General Discussion.
8. Election of 3 Committee members.

The present committee is Bas Woodward (Chairman), Roger Bowen (Secretary), Stan Verrinder (Treasurer), Mike Norris, Roy Mee, Ted Gregory and Roger Woodham.

If time permits the AGM will be followed by a showing of members' slides. The Secretary will be pleased to receive offers in advance so that he can arrange a programme.

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DINNER

The Annual Christmas Dinner will be held this year at the Blue Flag Cadmore End on Friday 21 December 1979 at 7.30 pm for 8.00 pm start. Unfortunately all places are taken. Mike Norris is in charge of the organisation with the help of Roy Mee and Stan Verrinder.

MEMBERSHIP

The following new members are welcomed to the Society:

T.A. Sansum, J. Shields, T. Shepherd, T.R. Suckling,
N. Mizen, C. Redgewell, G. Herrman, C.D. Gooding.

The number of members is now at 51, the highest since the Society started.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1980

The Treasurer has asked that all Members be reminded that the time for annual subscriptions has come around once again and the renewal form is enclosed. That's the bad news. Now the good news. Your Editor has been told in confidence by the Treasurer that he will be recommending at the AGM the annual and meeting subscriptions remain the same.

TALKS AND ARTICLES FOR THE SOCIETY

The giving of a talk or writing an article for the Society can be a daunting experience but you will find it enjoyable as well. So why not have a go.

TIES

A number of new members have joined since the Society tie was first ordered and the last has now been sold. The minimum re-order is 12 so if you are interested please see Stan Verrinder. Cost about £2.

THANKS FOR YOUR HELP

Although the Chairman and Committee are responsible for running the Society other Members have contributed to its success and they are:

Charlie Smith - our cine expert
Mike Walker - our window display expert
Alan Wheeler - our local railway history expert.

PREVIOUS THURSDAY NIGHT MEETINGS

We all enjoyed films from British Rail archives on 20 September. One or two had been shown before but they were shown again by special request.

George Herrman showed his expertise on American Railroads when he took us through his collection of slides on his journeys from Chicago to the West Coast of the USA. Those who were lucky enough to be present on 18 October felt that he had enough material for a return visit in the future.

On 15 November a local film professional John Samsom showed the film he had made on the restoration of Britannia. It was enjoyed so much that it was re-run. There is no doubt that John has caught that more incurable of diseases a love of steam railways.

EVENING CLASSES

Your Secretary will again be tutoring two evening classes on the "History of Railways" after Christmas.

On Mondays starting on 14 January the venue is the Burnham County Secondary School, Opendale Road, Burnham at 1930 hrs. On Wednesdays starting on 16 January the venue is the Chalfonts County Secondary School, Narcot Lane, Chalfont St. Peter at 1945 hrs.

Further information on the Burnham course can be obtained from Mrs. N. Pike, 2 Maypole Road, Taplow (Tel. Burnham 61607) and on the Chalfont course from Mr. J. Tubby, The Climb, Gold Hill, Chalfont St. Peter (Tel. Gerrards Cross 83918). All members will be welcome.

Advance information is that it is planned that "History of the Great Western Railway" will be held after Easter at the John Collet County Secondary School, Wharf Road, Wendover, Bucks. Further information should be available in the next issue of the Marlow Donkey.

HISTORY OF RAILWAYS - PART 3 - Contributed by Roger Bowen

Further expansion of the Railways

The first constituent of the Midland Railway opened between Derby and Nottingham in 1839 and Leicester and Derby in 1840 also the Birmingham and Gloucester in 1840. The latter connection brought the broad and standard gauge conflict as the broad gauge had reached Gloucester from Swindon. The ultimate result was the Gauge Act of 1846.

In the North East George Hudson was the main power. He promoted the York and North Midland Railway from York to Normanton and also the York and Darlington in 1841. He became a great power, Lord Mayor of York and Member of Parliament for Sunderland before falling due to manipulating share books and paying dividends out of capital etc.

In the North West extensions saw lines from Manchester to Leeds in 1840 and Manchester to Sheffield via the notorious Woodhead Tunnel in 1845.

In Wales the Taff Vale opened in 1836, the Chester and Holyhead in 1845 and the South Wales from 1846 onwards.

The Railway Clearing House was created in 1842 with its headquarters in Drummond Street.

The years 1845 onwards were the period of the Railway Mania. In 1845 2170 miles of railway were authorised in Great Britain plus 645 in Ireland. In 1846 there were 369 English and Welsh Railway Bills before Parliament 107 Scottish and 43 Irish.

These were the years of battles between companies notably the London and North Western and Great Western; London and North Western and Midland; London and South Western and London Brighton and South Coast; Midland and Great Western. This was Victorian unfettered competition at its height. New London termini were built, the first part of the London Underground, the Metropolitan opened in 1863. In Wales the Festiniog Railway adopted steam in 1863 and the Talyllyn opened in 1866.

Bridging the Water Gaps

By the start of the last quarter of the 19th century much of the railway map had been completed. Notable omissions were the crossings of the three greatest water gaps, the Severn, the Tay and Forth.

Work on the Severn Tunnel commenced in 1877 and suspended in 1879 when the "Great Sprint" was hit. The tunnel finally opened in 1886 but only with the aid of Hawkshaw's pumps capable of dealing with 66 million gallons of water per day. Daniel Gooch lived to see this he died on 15 October 1889 aged 73, 3 years before the last broad gauge train ran in May 1892.

The first Tay Bridge designed by Thomas Bouch for the North British Railway and opened on 1 June 1878 was blown down in gales on 28 December 1879. Bouch was working on a design for a suspension bridge across the Forth which stopped with the Tay Bridge disaster. The bridge actually built was a cantilever bridge designed by John Fowler and Benjamin Baker and opened in 1890 by the Prince of Wales later King Edward VII.

Late Victorian Developments

The most well known personality of this period was Sir Edward Watkin. Watkin built up his own railway empire. In 1864 he was Chairman of the Manchester Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway, Chairman of the South Eastern Railway in 1866 and Chairman of both the Metropolitan Railway and the Channel Tunnel Company in 1872. At the same time J. Stoats Forbes was Chairman of the District Railway and the London Chatham

and Dover Railway. To put it mildly there was great animosity on both sides. Watkins great dream however was through trains from Manchester to Paris over Watkin's lines of course. By 1892 the Metropolitan had reached Aylesbury and by its previous purchase of the Aylesbury and Buckingham Railway ran through to Verney Junction near Claydon. In the North the MSLR had reached Annesley In North Derbyshire in 1893. In the same year the MSLR obtained an Act to construct a line from Annesley to Quainton Road between Verney Junction and Aylesbury with running powers over the Metropolitan to Canfield Place London and a new line from there to a terminus at Marylebone. The company changed its name to Great Central in 1897. The line opened to coal trains in 1898 and passengers on 15 March 1899.

Far away from London the extreme ends of the railway system were being completed. In 1880 the line from Callender to Oban was opened. In 1894 the North British opened the West Highland Line from Craiendoran a distance of 100 miles to Fort William. The final extension to Mallaig came in 1901 but only after a Treasury guarantee of 3% dividend on £260,000 capital. This was the only occasion of government help in the Victorian era to railways in Great Britain although similar schemes had been evolved in Ireland. In the meantime the Highland line to Kyle of Lochalsh opened in 1897.

In the West of Wales Fishguard was developed as a port for Rosslare in Ireland and the North American traffic.

This was the period of the light railway. The Light Railway Act 1896 simplified procedures. Under this Act some street tramways were built also the Selsey Tramway, Easingfold Railway and the Kent and East Sussex Railway.

Urban congestion was noticeable in late Victorian times and this prompted the construction of a number of urban lines. The first London "Tube" the City and South London opened in 1890, the Liverpool Overhead in 1893, the Glasgow Underground in 1896 and the Waterloo and City (owned by the London and South Western) in 1898.

Fuelling Japans Furnaces

In recent years much comment has been made regarding the heavier freight trains now operating on BR which have led to Class 56 locomotives and the forthcoming Class 58. However, they seem small compared to the 'Super Freights' operated in Western Canada by Canadian Pacific.

These trains have their origins in Japan, a country with massive needs for energy and little or no natural resources. Coal is imported in vast quantities from Canada which has huge reserves in the Rocky Mountains of South Eastern British Columbia. To serve this trade the Robbers Bank Port Development was established in the early seventies. This is a massive pier like structure, jutting into the Straights of Georgia between Vancouver and the US border, which loads bulk carriers.

The trains are loaded at mines at Fording River and Sparwood on CP's Crowsnest line. As the southern transcontinental main line is no longer open (it closed at a through route in 1973) the trains operate over the old Kootenay Central Railway through Fort Steele and the Columbia valley to Golden where the transcontinental main line is joined for the run down to the coast. Near Vancouver the trains leave the CP line to operate over Canadian National tracks to reach Roberts Bank.

Each train is formed of between 106 and 108 special cars, called 'Bathtub Gondolas'. These are 59' long, weigh 23.7 tons and can carry 105 tons of coal, they are equipped with rotary couplers and air brakes. The fully laden train weighs around 14,000 tons so the motive power becomes interesting, especially as the route is among the most steeply graded in the world. The motive power is drawn from CP's fleet of 312 General Motors model SD40-2 CoCo diesel electrics. These monsters are 72' long and weigh around 197 tons. The V16 cylinder 2 stroke General Motors engine develops 3,000 hp and the locomotives have a maximum tractive effort of 71,000 lbs. In addition the SD40-2 has dynamic brakes, where the traction motors are, in effect, reversed to act as generators, the trains kinetic energy is therefore converted to electricity and then to heat dissipated through resistors behind bodyside grilles. In appearance the SD40 is a typical North American 'hood unit' with single cabs and a low nose at one end. Walkways pass along each side of the body. Full height doors afford exceptional engine access. With no frills they have, in your writer's opinion, a functional beauty not matched by any British design. An SD40 costs around £220,000!

The unit trains leave the colliery with two SD40's on the front and a further three SD40's, remotely controlled by radio, situated halfway along the train. On reaching the main line at Golden a further pair of SD40's are added on the front making 2,1000 hp. A further 33 miles west at Rogers another five SD40's, this time manned by a separate crew in radio contact with the head end, are attached behind the caboose to push up the climb through the Selkirk range to Stoney Creek, where in 9 miles the line climbs at 1 in 45 to an altitude of 3565' and then down from the 5 mile long Connaught Tunnel (Canada's longest) through Glacier to Albert Canyon where the five rear end helpers come off. Their use on the downhill section is to use the aforementioned Dynamic Brakes to control the train and avoid excessive wear on the air operated friction brakes. Nevertheless the smoke from overheated brake blocks is a familiar sight in the mountains.

At Chase, 185½ miles from Golden, two of the head end locomotives are removed and the train continues its journey through the Frazer Canyon with two SD40's up front and three mid-train. On reaching Roberts Bank the train is unloaded automatically, each car is rotated through 180° and its load discharged into bunkers for loading into ships by conveyor. Special sensors ensure that the locomotives are not inverted.

Unloading completed the train returns east to obtain a fresh load. The complete round trip is 1,400 miles and takes around 72 hours. Although the trains are specials (only the 'Canadian' passenger trains 1 and 2 have booked paths over the main line in the Pacific region) five or six trains leave the mines daily.

At their maximum the trains are nearly $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles long, have twelve locomotives producing 36,000 hp and the full train weighs around 16,000 tons including motive power, which surely qualifies them as the heaviest trains in the world. At dusk with head and ditch lights throwing their beams and the chime horns echoing off the mountains they make an awe inspiring sight as they thunder through the spectacular scenery of western Canada.

SECOND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - MARLOW AND DISTRICT RAILWAY SOCIETY
HELD ON 25TH JANUARY, 1979 AT 20.00 HOURS AT THE MARLOW DONKEY

Seventeen members attended the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from the Chairman, Bas Woodward and the Secretary Roger Bowen due to the fact that it was a day when Marlow and the surrounding area experienced very bad weather conditions, which coupled with an industrial dispute, made road conditions impossible. As a result the Treasurer, Stan Verrinder, chaired the meeting.

(1) Minutes

The minutes of the first Annual General Meeting held on 12th January, 1978 were taken as read and were approved.

(2) Matters Arising

There were none.

(3) Chairman's Report

1978 was a most successful year for the Society in that not only had the number of members now reached 50, but also the attendance at all the meetings was high.

In addition to the meetings at the Marlow Donkey the Chairman mentioned the various outings which had been arranged, and in particular, singled out the trip to the 'Bluebell Line' which proved to be so popular. Another success was the weekend in France, a venture which is being repeated this year.

(4) Treasurer's Report

The balance at the beginning of 1978 was £35.76 as against £74.02 at the end of the year. It was felt that the Society was in such a strong financial condition it was not necessary to increase the annual or meeting subscriptions.

The Treasurer was pleased to note that twenty-three subscriptions had already been received for 1979, the income and expenditure account is attached.

(5) Announcement of Events for 1979

It was announced that there was an addition to the list printed in the magazine, this was:

19th July, 1979 - 'Life on the Footplate' -
D. Fendley - Divisional Traction
Inspection - Reading

(6) Items for General Discussion

(a) It was suggested that the Committee might include in its future programme talks/outings, etc. on non-railway subjects, e.g. steam beam engines and canals. The consensus of opinion was that although the history of the railways was very much tied in with, and affected by, other things which developed at the same time, the programme should only include items which are more closely associated with railways.

(b) In reply to the question - "Should there be a meeting during August this year" - there not having been one in the past, it was decided there should be one. A visit to Pendon was suggested.

(c) Family Membership - a question was asked whether the present subscription of £2 per person should be reduced if several members of one family joined the Society. Les Spicer stated that he was not in favour with this suggestion bearing in mind the original aims of the Society which did not intend it to become a family club.

(d) The following motion was proposed by Les Spicer and seconded by Mike Walker that the annual membership subscription shall be £2 per person but new members joining after September 1st in any year should pay £1. This was approved by the meeting.

(e) Mike Walker announced forthcoming trips organised by the Maidenhead and Marlow Passenger Association which were:

10th June, 1979	Cardiff and Tenby
5th Aug, 1979	Dawlish, Torquay and Paignton
2nd Sept, 1979	York and Scarborough

(f) Eric Dove expressed his gratitude and admiration for all members of the Committee for all the effort they had put in and in particular the contribution from Les Spicer, who regrettably is resigning from the Committee.

(g) It was felt to be important that in future meetings should start on time, 'Parish Notices' must be completed by 20.15. When a guest speaker is invited the Newsletter should state that the meeting will commence 19.45 for 20.00.

(h) In order to eliminate some of the problems that have been experienced in the past when using a cine projector, Charlie Smith kindly offered the loan of a projector together with spares.

(i) Alan Wheeler was congratulated for the display of his models in the Science Museum.

(7) Election of Committee Members

Existing:	Bas Woodward (Chairman)
	Roger Bowen (Secretary)
	Stan Verrinder (Treasurer)
	Roy Mee
	Mike Norris
	Les Spicer
	Ted Gregory

Standing Down:	Roger Bowen
	Stan Verrinder
	Mike Norris

All three offered themselves for re-election and as there were no other nominations all were re-elected. Les Spicer had submitted his resignation from the Committee who subsequently co-opted Roger Woodham onto the Committee.

The Chairman closed the meeting by thanking all those who had braved the extreme weather to attend the meeting. The planned slide show of members slides was cancelled due to the Secretary being snowed-up in High Wycombe.


MARLOW AND DISTRICT RAILWAY SOCIETY

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 1978

<u>Income</u>	£	(1977)	<u>Expenditure</u>	£	(1977)	
Brought Forward from 1977	35.76	(-)	Hire of Room	22.00	(20)	
Annual Subscriptions paid in advance-22	44.00	}	Hire of Films	19.44	(22)	
Annual Subscriptions - 23	46.00		(58)	Lecturers' Expenses	20.50	(-)
Annual Subscriptions - Half Year - 5	5.00		}	Transport Trust Membership	5.00	(5)
Meeting Subscriptions - 273	68.25			(53)	Stationery	12.15
Profit on Trips	5.37	(-)	Postage and Envelopes	32.77	(10)	
Donation	5.00	(-)	Trips - expenses	3.10	(-)	
Bank Interest	2.90	(1)	Donation - Old Folks	5.00	(-)	
			Dinner expenses	16.30	(-)	
			Printing	2.00	(-)	
			Cash at Bank	74.02	(36)	

£212.28

£212.28


Stan Verrinder
Hon Treasurer.
1 January 1979

MARLOW & DISTRICT RAILWAY SOCIETY

Aims and Rules

Aims of the Society

To increase knowledge and to further interest in all aspects of standard and narrow-gauge railways by means of discussion, films, talks by visiting speakers and by visits to centres of railway interest.

Rules of the Society

1) Membership

Membership of the Society shall be open to anyone over the age of sixteen years with an interest in standard or narrow-gauge railways.

2) Officers

The Committee shall consist of not less than five and not more than seven members who shall elect the Officers of the Society viz. Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. The Committee shall have power to co-opt other members as may be found desirable. At each Annual General Meeting the three Committee members with longest service on the Committee shall stand down and shall be eligible for re-election

3) Subscription

The annual subscription shall be £2.00 per person but new members joining after 1st September in any year should pay £1.00. This is payable on joining the Society, thereafter on January 1st of each year. Members shall also pay the sum of twenty-five pence each per meeting attended. The funds of the Society shall be used by the Committee to defray the cost of accommodation, postage, stationery, telephones, hire of films or slides, payment to visiting speakers, visits by members to railway centres or otherwise in the interests of the Society as the Committee shall see fit. An accounting of income and expenditure shall be given by the Treasurer at each Annual General Meeting.

4) The rules of the Society may be changed only at Annual General Meetings by a majority vote of paid-up members present.

Approved at a meeting of the Society on 24th February, 1977 and amended at the 2nd Annual General Meeting on 25th January, 1979.