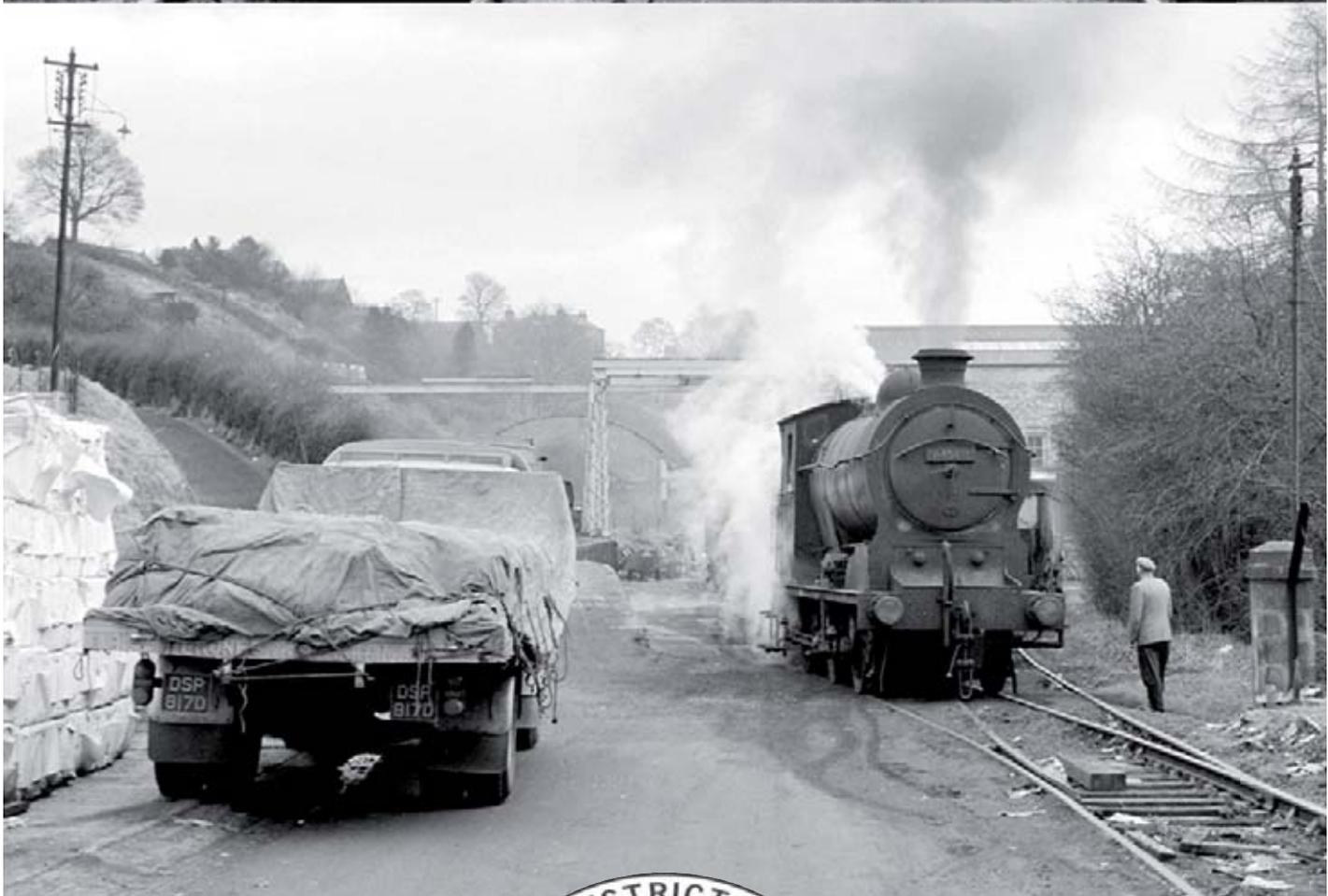
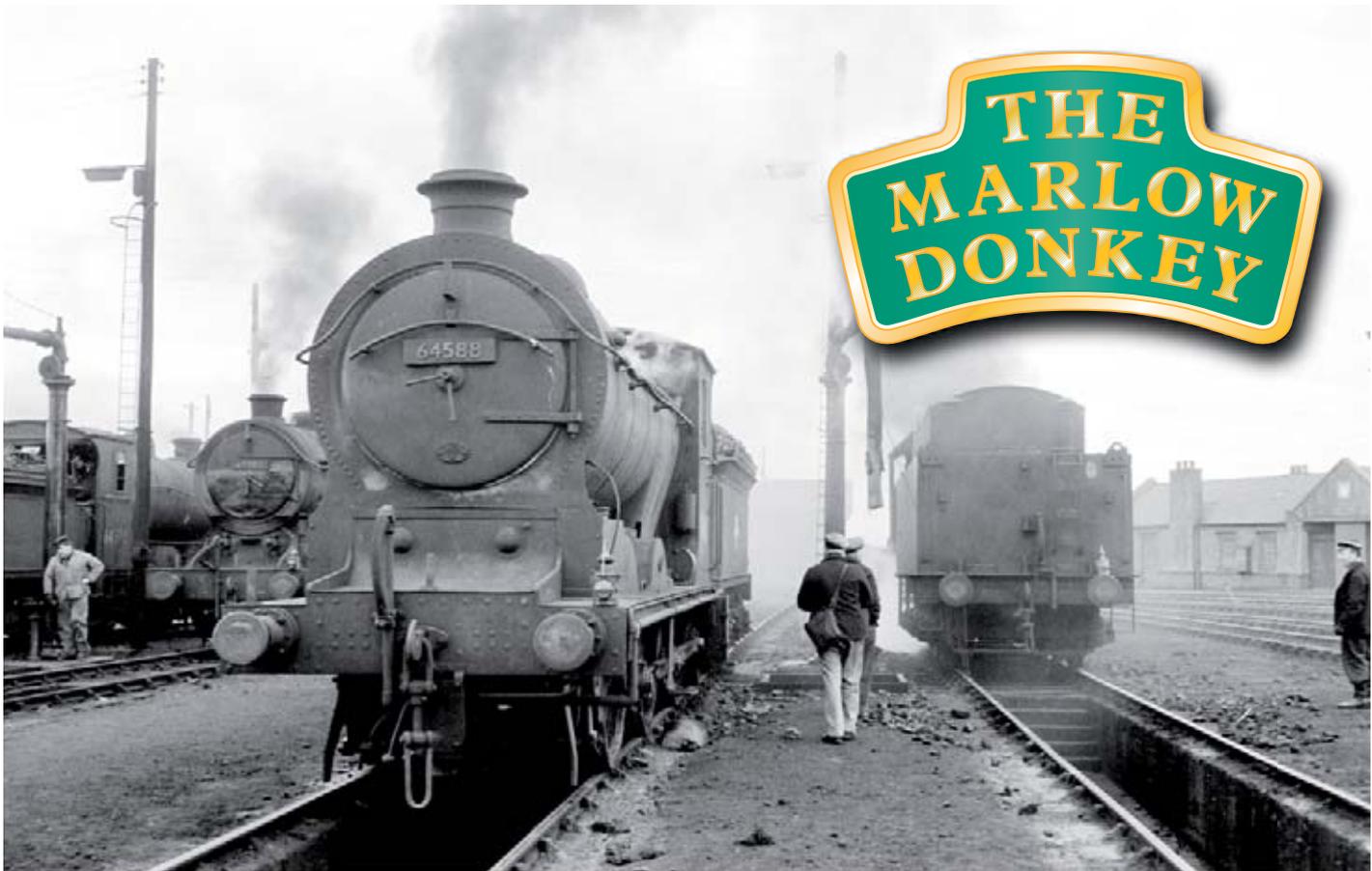


THE MARLOW DONKEY



Edition

143

December 2013



Contents:

A Slim Line Tonic

A Connecticut Yankee - Part 2

Touring Scotland 1966 - Part 2

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

CONTENTS

TIMETABLE - Forthcoming meetings	Page 2
CHAIRMAN'S NOTES Tim Speechley	2
SOCIETY & LOCAL NEWS	3
CHINNOR CELEBRATES A BIRTHDAY Mike Walker	5
A SLIM LINE TONIC The Society visits the Great Cockrow Railway Tim Speechley	7
A CONNECTICUT YANKEE IN KING ARTHUR'S COURT Part 2 Don Woodworth	9
ON THE CAMBRIAN COAST EXPRESS - To Norton Fitzwarren Tim Edmonds	13
TOURING WITH OURS IN SCOTLAND IN 1966 Part 2 Mike Page	15

FRONT COVER PHOTOGRAPHS

Top: Locos being prepared in Thornton shed yard on March 16, 1966.

Photo: Mike Page. (Article page 9).

Bottom: 64588 shunts coal wagons on March 16, 1966.

Photo: Mike Page. (Article page 9).

TIMETABLE

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

All meetings are held in the Bourne End Community Centre, Wakeman Rd, Bourne End at 7.45 for 8.00pm.

- Thursday 20 December **CHRISTMAS SOCIAL**
Our annual gathering for members, families and friends will take much the same form as recent years.
- Thursday 23 January **EAST OF AFGHANISTAN** Ian Silvester
Ian will present a travelogue covering the far-east.
- Thursday 20 February **AGM AND BAKER STREET TO BRILL** Ron White
After a hopefully brief AGM, Ron White will return with a one of his excellently researched talks this time on the Metropolitan Railway delivered in his unique style.
- Thursday 20 March **FRENCH HIGH SPEED RAIL** Michael Bunn
The well-known authority on French railways returns to recount the story of the TGV from prototypes to the present day.
- Thursday 17 April **THE BULLEID PACIFICS** Collin Boocock
Collin, a former BR manager, is an acknowledged expert on the Bulleid Pacifics having worked with them at Eastleigh.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Standing on the platform at the new Blackfriars station during our Society visit to various London termini, it struck me just how out of touch I am with modern developments, both rail related and other. It was my first time here and it came as a complete surprise that the station now spans the Thames and affords a splendid view both up and down the river. I recognised the Shard but there were other huge buildings of which I knew nothing. Moving on to London Bridge I had to be told to get off the train by fellow members as the scene here has changed completely and I hadn't recognised where we were. Last time I was here the huge overall roof was still in place but now is gone forever.

It's just the same with the trains themselves. I've really no idea what a 319 or a 377 unit looks like, nor, to be completely honest, do I care much because in my mind they're both as boring as each other. This isn't to say they don't provide excellent travel just that I personally can't get very excited about them. I realise that the modern railways are transporting many more people far quicker and more frequently than ever before but in comparison with the past there seems to be so little variety to generate any real enthusiasm, certainly from me. I think it really boils down to the reduction in the infrastructure. In the December edition of *Railway Magazine* there are two photographs of Mexborough by Dr Les Nixon, who we hope will be able to visit us in June next year. They show the same scene in 1977 and again recently. In the former there is a four track main line in a cutting with another line crossing it on an overbridge and, in the background, the huge Manvers Main colliery and coking plant. Today you would never guess the principal railway and heavy industry had ever

existed at this spot, as the cutting has been filled in completely and modern steel framed buildings constructed. I can't think of another "before and after" picture I've seen lately that sums up that disappearance of the sheer "presence" of the railway system throughout the country. I know it all lost vast sums of money but it was all so amazingly impressive and very interesting.

The preserved railways do an excellent job of recreating some aspects of the old days but for obvious reasons do not have the ability to replicate the enormous scale of installations in the past. However, in miniature it does become possible to a certain degree. The day after our London trip I went to the huge Warley model railway exhibition at the NEC and amongst the enormous number of layouts on show there were a handful that showed the railways for what they were – big, expansive and above all, interesting. I suspect my favourite was a layout called "The Gresley Beat" showing the LNER in the immediate pre-war days with vast amounts of freight, marshalling yards, locomotive depots and of course the then new streamlined expresses and A4 locos. They were running one goods train with 82 wagons and also had their own "great gathering" of the six streaks, though had had to borrow one in BR green livery, which looked out of place amongst the garter blue and silver. Though I don't model myself I do enjoy visiting these events as it gives a chance to go back in time and see things I never had the opportunity to witness for myself, albeit in miniature.

Whatever it is that excites you about railways, may I wish you and your families a very Happy Christmas and an interesting and enthusiastic New Year..

Tim Speechley

SOCIETY AND LOCAL NEWS

NEW MEMBER

It is our pleasure to welcome a new member to the Society, Ian Benning who lives in Marlow. Ian tells us he has recently retired from a career in the diesel business but has always had a passion for steam. We look forward to seeing him at our meetings and events.

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

It seems to be becoming a regular season opener by our Chairman, Tim Speechley who trawled through his archives to present the third part of his Seventies Miscellany. Once again it was a nostalgic trip back in time and took in some road transport and shipping as well as railways. It's amazing how much has changed in such a comparatively short period of time.

In October Bob Sweet came along with a superb programme showing the railways from a different perspective. Following an accident that brought a premature end to a police career and a chance meeting on Bristol Temple Meads station, Bob has embarked on the role of "unofficial photographer" to various train operators and railway press leading him to all sorts of unique events. We were left envious of his good fortune.

Geoff Plumb returned in November for another of his "That was the year that was" programmes this time looking back at 1964 and visiting large parts of the country with extended coverage of the Cambrian lines and Isle of Wight. As always the images were simply superb and a feast for the eyes. It's incredible to think he was taking shots like that at a mere fourteen years of age.

AND VISITS

We've had two "outdoor" events during the autumn to the Great Cockrow Railway and a visit to London termini. The former is the subject of a full report in this issue but the latter, coming only days before this issue goes to press, will be reported on next time. However the dozen or so members who took part had a most enjoyable and informative tour led by David Wadley of the LT Museum and we even managed to get some steam in too!



David Wadley, in the red coat, centre, leads MDRS members across the new concourse at Kings Cross during our London termini tour on 23 November. 2013.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions become due for renewal in January. The good news is that Peter Robins has decided to keep the rate unchanged for the coming year, that is £16.00. The reduced rate for those of you who live some distance away and therefore attend meetings only on rare occasions remains at £8.00 with a meeting attendance fee of £2.00. Visitors to the Society's meetings will be asked to pay a £3.00 admission fee although that will be reduced to £2 for our friends from the Maidenhead RCTS branch in a reciprocal arrangement.

Please use the form supplied with this issue so we can ensure our records are kept fully up to date. We look forward to your continued support.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

As in previous years, a pack containing all the reports and other documentation will be distributed to members in advance of February's AGM to enable us to keep the business part of the meeting to a minimum.

NORMAN ASTON-SMITH TROPHY

As usual voting will take place during the Annual General Meeting in February for the Norman Aston-Smith Trophy which is awarded annually to the author of what is considered to be the year's best contribution to the pages of the *Marlow Donkey*.

RCTS MAIDENHEAD MEETINGS

The Maidenhead & Windsor branch of the RCTS have the following meetings planned for the coming months:

Mon 27 Jan. West Somerset Railway by Ken Smith.

Mon 24 Feb. Isle of Wight - Offshore Railways in Transition by Iain Whitlam.

Mon 24 March Brunel: His Life & Times by Peter Lugg

Mon 28 April GW Electrification by Network Rail

All meetings are held at the Cox Green Community Centre, Highfield Lane, Cox Green, Maidenhead starting at 19:30 and MDRS members are always welcome to attend.



An unexpected bonus of the tour was the arrival at Kings Cross from Newcastle of 60009 Union of South Africa seen here passing Finsbury from Park where some of us intercepted it.

A BUSY CHRISTMAS

Whilst we are enjoying the Christmas break, Network Rail engineers will be engaged in a massive programme of works at various points along the Thames Valley section of the Great Western Main Line as preparations continue for Crossrail, electrification and the next stage of the Reading project.

Working outwards from Paddington, work starts in the Ladbroke Grove/Kensal Green area where the long-disused carriage washing plant will be removed along with Carriage Line 2 and the Old Oak Common Engine Siding just west of the flyover. Preparatory works will also be undertaken to connect the former Eurostar North Pole depot to the GWML at the London end of the flyover.

At Old Oak Common itself there will be a number of changes to the layout at the entrance of the FGW depot which will not be noticeable from passing trains but are all part of the preparatory work for Crossrail. The former MPD site, currently being used to make the tunnel segments for Crossrail, will ultimately be the site of the main Crossrail depot and it is for this that many of the changes in this area are being made.

Moving west, the next stage in the construction of the new underpass to take the Up Acton Relief under the western entrance/exit to Acton Yard takes place. Regular travellers will have seen the large excavation taking place and the construction of the bridge. The next stage is to reconfigure and commission the yard entrance/exit tracks across this bridge.

At Airport Junction the Dawley Goods Loop will be shortened at the London end and alterations made to the signalling to provide space for the continuing construction of the two additional flyovers which will eliminate the conflicting moves of trains running from the Relief Lines to the airport. Also in the Hayes area, the new trailing crossover between the Up and Down Mains just east of the station which was installed some time ago will be commissioned. This is to enable a train coming off the airport branch running wrong road (the branch is bi-directionally signalled) to return to the correct line more quickly. At present they have to travel wrong road as far as Southall East taking out a considerable amount of capacity on the Down Main in the process. This facility is only used in emergencies.

The first part of Slough Panel's area to pass to the TVSC will be from its current eastern boundary down to approximately where the M25 crosses near Iver. This takes place over Christmas with the Hayes Workstation of the TVSC assuming control. At the same time, the boundaries of the Paddington, Acton and Hayes Workstations will be revised.

As part of this change, the Colnbrook branch will be fully signalled throughout with Track Circuit Block controlled by axle counters. This is a radical change as up to now it has been worked by 'C2 Regulation', a unique to the Western form of working which basically means all moves over the branch have been under the authority of the designated Person In Charge at West Drayton or Colnbrook - depending on where he is at the time!

At Maidenhead more Crossrail preparatory work will see platform 5 partly closed for the whole Christmas and New Year period. This is to allow engineers to cut back the edge at the London end. Originally it was intended to lift the track at the same time and undertake strengthening works on the subway roof but this won't now happen at this time so, having cut away part of the platform they will be putting a temporary structure back in its place. Well, we presume it makes sense to someone, somewhere!

Regular or irregular users of the branch should be aware that from Friday 27 to Sunday 29 December inclusive and on Sunday 5 January, buses will replace the branch train. There will be two bus services, a Marlow to Maidenhead "fast" (non-stop) and an all stations local. Normal services resume on Monday 6 January.

At Reading works at this time, known as Stage J, are concentrated on the Berks & Hants line out to just beyond Southcote Junction. Whilst there will be few alterations to the layout, the area will be completely resignalled including some new bi-directional working which at this time appears to be superfluous or lead nowhere but this is being installed at this stage in preparation for the new underpass lines into the station and other wider resignalling. Incidentally, construction of the massive flyover which will carry the main lines over the complex almost as far as Scours Lane is progressing at a rapid rate and is due to be brought into use at Christmas 2014.

Also at Reading the reconstruction work on platforms 7, 8 and 9 is due to be finished over the holiday period which will allow platform 6 to be brought back into use. It has been blocked since September to provide exit routes from the temporary platform 7. Hopes that platform 10 would also be brought back into use at this time have been dashed, February or March currently seems to be the target or possibly even Easter.

Finally, west of Didcot some resignalling work is being carried out through the Vale of the White Horse. This is to eliminate the remaining old-style gantries which have insufficient clearance for Overhead Line Equipment. The replacement signals, including those for wrong road running (this section is bi-directionally signalled), will all be on posts so those for wrong road running will be mounted to the right of the running line. At one point it seemed that Network Rail were going to replace down relief signal SB913 at Didcot East Junction for the same reason. However it appears that they have now realised that it was replaced *last* Christmas!

Outside our area but worthy of a comment, a new platform is being brought into use at Gatwick Airport. This has seen an inordinate amount of confusion with the final details being issued to the train operators at a late date. One of the Southern Railway's managers involved commented, with a perfectly straight face, "with such a big and complex project you expect delays and last minute changes." That's a loop, one platform, a crossover, four new signals and changes to six more. A colleague at FGW said he could hardly stop himself laughing - what would they do faced with above?!

A SLIM-LINE TONIC

The Society visit to the Great Cockcrow Railway

Tim Speechley

As a result of personal connections, Julian Heard was able to arrange for a group of MDRS members to visit this very extensive 7¼ inch gauge line, not on a normal public opening day but instead as part of a special event open principally to GC club members, when they invite representatives of other model engineering societies to attend and to bring their own locomotives to run on the GCR. This meant that the normal restrictions on access to workshops, sheds and running lines did not apply and we had carte blanche. Although I had visited the line once before, it was about 25 years ago, so I was not sure what to expect this time.

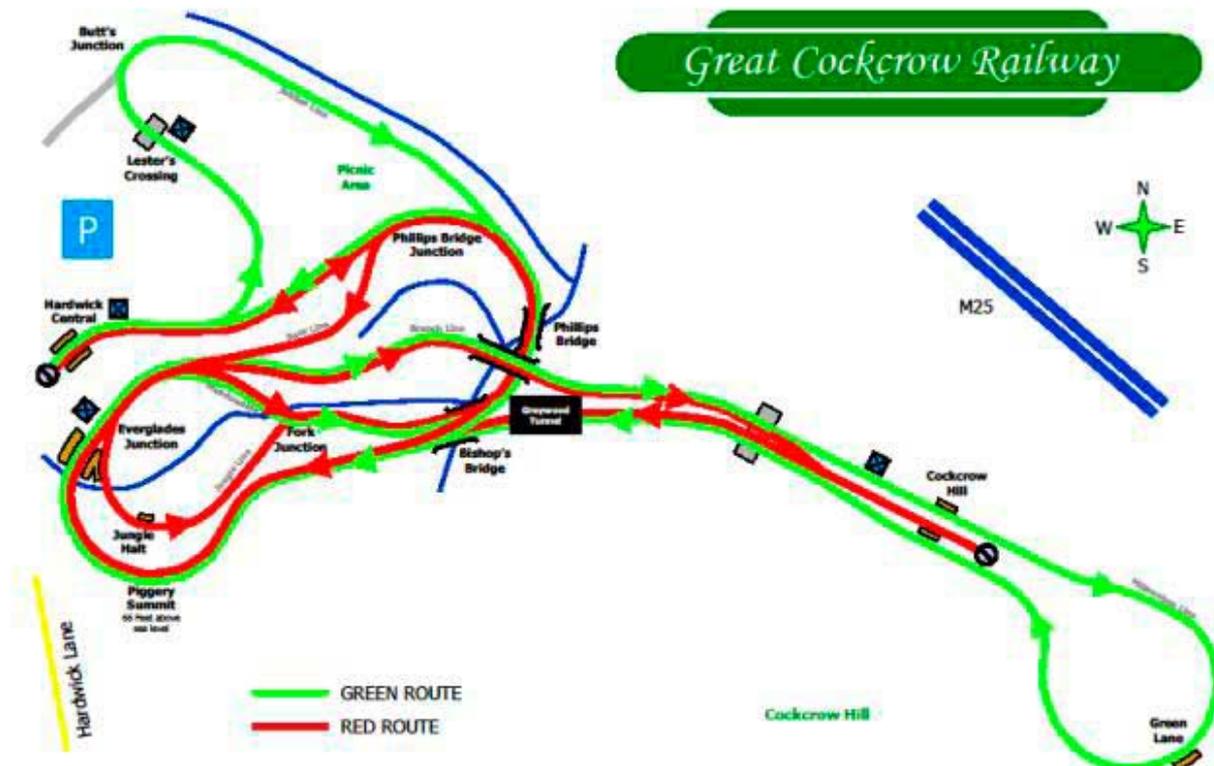
It is a shame that so few of our MDRS members managed to attend, given Julian's efforts to arrange things, but we few who did go had a very entertaining day, despite the very gloomy weather of 14 September. The line is located at Lyne, near Chertsey, very close to the M25, so the car journey was not very long, though following Julian's instructions to exit at junction 10 was a mistake, as the railway is near J11. In fact, turning back on ourselves and returning north on the motorway was really just a prelude to the rest of the day, because the GCR running lines consist of a series of loops, as is obvious if you look at the map of the line (below), kindly supplied by the railway.

Mike Hyde and I travelled together and on arrival met up with Chris Waite and Roger Woodham (both of whom had been there for some time, having ignored Julian's instructions). The first thing that impressed me was the large and obviously new station building, which incorporates a café, toilets and facilities for club members. We grabbed a coffee and went off to find the platforms here at Hardwick Central, which is where all passenger trains start from and terminate.

there was already lots of activity with locomotives being steamed up at the adjacent shed and others moving around. Amongst these were Britannias 70008 *Black Prince* (that I think was visiting from the Grimsby area) and 70052 *Firth of Tay*; King 6024 *King Edward I* (though this had mechanical problems and did not see much use); Standard 2 2-6-0 78004; a Metropolitan 4-4-0T; a freelance 0-4-0 side tank *Pat*; London Transport 0-6-0T L31; Schools 30940 *St Leonards* (that carried a tiny worksplate with the touching words "In memory of my dear mum Gladys"); an outside framed GWR 0-6-0 788; Merchant Navy 35028 *Clan Line*; GWR outside cylindered 0-6-0PT 1369 and, later, Standard 2 2-6-2T 84008. There was also a Hall, 7915 *Mere Hall*, outside the shed but I did not see it working.

I took the opportunity to have a look inside the two separate shed buildings and amongst the locos not being operated today were the following:- LMS Royal Scot 6115 *Scots Guardsman*; Southern 2-6-0 1803 *River Itchen*; NER 0-8-0 1249 *Hecate*; Southern Atlantic 2422 *North Foreland*; 850 *Lord Nelson*; Q class 0-6-0 30541; Great Eastern Decapod 0-10-0T; a GNR Atlantic; 0-6-0ST *Wensleydale*; LNER 2-6-0 206 (a K3 ?); GWR 0-4-2T 1401; another LNER 2-6-0 1935; 0-6-0ST *Buttercup* lettered for Stewarts and Lloyds; LMS Princess Coronation 46245 *City of London*; three LMS Black Fives, 5000; 5145 and 45400; GWR Dean Goods 2527 and Southern T9 4-4-0 730. This may not be an exhaustive list but shows the range of motive power available.

As well as the steam there were several other locos including a class 31, a class 20 (with quite realistic sound) and Metropolitan Railway (LT) *Sarah Siddons*. I assume all of these are battery powered.





Hardwick Central station with the new building beyond

Initially I took a ride behind 78004 and we covered a fair bit of the available track, though on the day, without the benefit of a map, it was quite difficult to determine quite where one was going. Later I managed a ride behind *Clan Line* and it was more than an hour before I finally arrived back at Hardwick Central, having traversed several of the loops at least twice and, I think, the Cockcrow Hill line three times. This latter has quite a severe gradient and also features a short tunnel. Fortunately I had brought a packed lunch and managed to avoid acute hunger by eating on the move. I wonder how many other 7¼ inch lines can boast dining trains?

As the day progressed there seemed to be more and more trains operating. Fortunately the line is comprehensively signalled but the overall impression was rather like that of "The Great St Trinians' Train Robbery" with trains suddenly appearing unexpectedly from all directions. It was great fun. At one point there was the sound of a very loud siren and if I understood correctly this indicated there had been a SPAD (signal passed at danger). Things were soon resolved and normal service resumed.

It was a great shame the weather could not have been kinder but although very grey it did at least stay dry, a major benefit when travelling in open coaches. I did venture off on foot to photograph operations but given the gloom, used mostly video. It was a great privilege to be able to wander about almost everywhere without hindrance, something completely impossible on public running days.



Class 31 on the Cockcrow Hill line



Locos being prepared on shed



70008 Black Prince departs from Hardwick Central with Mike Hyde on board

Many thanks are due to the Great Cockcrow Railway for allowing us to participate and enjoy this club running day and to Julian for organising it for us. Should the opportunity arise again, I for one will jump at the chance and I recommend you do too. The railway does operate for the public most Sundays throughout the summer and should you wish to make a private visit, full details can be found at <http://www.cockcrow.co.uk>



84008 waiting to leave the shed area

CHINNOR CELEBRATES A BIRTHDAY

**Words by Mike Walker
Photographs as noted.**



Photos: Above: Mike Walker Below; Geoff Plumb.

Over the first three weekends of October the Chinnor & Princes Risborough held its most ambitious event to date. This was to mark the 60th anniversary of resident Class 08 D3018 which has spent nearly all its career in the local area having been a works shunter at Wolverton and after that the depot shunter at Bletchley until it was retired by BR. Currently wearing BR green livery it is seen arriving at Chinnor [Top] with a train from Thame Junction on 12th October, the second weekend of the event. It had been formally named *Haversham* the previous week, a name which had carried unofficially for many years.

A feature of the event was the intensive train service which ran each day particularly on the Saturdays when, thanks to a temporary connection made by Network Rail at Thame Junction, Chiltern Railways provided visiting equipment which ran through to Chinnor from Aylesbury each morning and return at the end of the day.

On the first weekend, Saturday 5th October, Chiltern supplied 165001 which had been specially “bulled-up” at Aylesbury depot for the occasion and is seen [Upper Middle] heading away from Horsendon Crossing with that historic first through working. Despite the choice of 001 for this honour, it wasn’t actually the first Turbo to get to Chinnor, that was 165034 which made a careful nocturnal gauging trip on 3rd October.

On the following weekends Chiltern sent one of their two Class 121 ‘Bubblecars’ with blue-liveried 121020 doing the honours on 12th October and caught at Chinnor [Lower Middle] and BR-green liveried 121034, caught in the bucolic surroundings of Bledlow as it crosses West Lane near the cricket ground [Bottom] with the 10:40 Chinnor to Princes Risborough service, did the honours on 19th October.

The Chiltern units worked all the services through to Princes Risborough and were crewed by their personnel throughout as they were working over the national network from Thame Junction and none of Chinnor’s stock or crews are main line certified.

Between the through trips, the C&PRR ran shorter trips from Chinnor to Thame Junction and short shuttles were run from the station down to the end of track towards Watlington, a section of line not usually used for public trips. The result of all this activity was that on each Saturday some 80 train movements were scheduled at Chinnor station which equates to around one every 6 minutes!



Photos: Above: Phil Searle Below; Geoff Plumb.



At Princes Risborough a temporary platform just long enough for a 2-car Class 165 was constructed alongside the lead to the engineer's sidings and known as Platform 4. On 12th October 121020 leaves with one of the through workings to Chinnor [Right].

The connection at Thame Junction was from the end of the erstwhile Thame Branch rather than the siding formed out of the Chinnor Branch which is now out of use.

This also made the through trips to Aylesbury easier, trains from Aylesbury crossed to the Down Main south of the station and reversed at ME159 before running back through the station to access the branch.

Whilst some have speculated the connection may become permanent, some expensive changes will



Photos: Above: Phil Searle Below; both Mike Walker



be required at Princes Risborough to separate the C&PRR from the main network.

On the Sundays services ran only as far as Thame Junction using the C&PRR's own stock which included both Wolverton's shunters, 08629 *Wolverton* and 08649 *Bradwell* [Above left] and LU-liveried 20227 [Above right] which appeared on the second weekend only.



On the other weekends steam operated some services in the form of the South Devon Railway's 1369 [Below left] currently on an extended visit to the railway.

The event was judged a huge success with most trains being filled to capacity so Peter Cartwright's RML2440 [Below right] provided a relief service between the two towns.

Photos: both Phil Searle



A CONNECTICUT YANKEE IN KING ARTHUR'S COURT

Part 2 Great Expectations Col. Don Woodworth

Don Woodworth, a friend of the late Dave Theobald, spent 8 years living in the UK in the seventies and eighties whilst serving with the US Air Force. A lifelong rail enthusiast, Don continues his look back at his experiences during that period which led him to explore almost every mile of the network and provides an interesting perspective on our railways at that time from the viewpoint of an outsider.



With profound apologies to Mr. Dickens, I had long hoped for an assignment to the UK – being fully aware of the wonderful treasure trove of Victorian architecture and engineering that existed throughout the country. While train sheds were largely a thing of the past in the United States, and the few that were still in use hosted far more pigeons than trains and humans, I was keenly aware that nearly every major British city hosted at least one train shed and that the stations so blessed were a hive of activity. One of my favorite stations is Kings Cross. I love its Italianate simplicity. No favors were done to the station when BR built the more modern concourse in front of the headhouse – and the less said about the “modernization” of Euston Station the better. I eventually came to have ridden trains in and out of every railway station in London. Of the lesser known stations, I rather liked Fenchurch Street.

On the plus side, wonderful work was done with the restoration of St. Pancras and the facelift to Liverpool Street. I dearly love the Great Eastern Hotel sign at Liverpool Street and likewise its wonderful train sheds – particularly with the overhead walkways at the south end of the station which allow the visitor to enjoy a really wonderful panorama of the sheds.



Fenchurch Street Station. This seldom remarked station is contemporaneous with Kings Cross, originally built in 1841 and remodeled in 1854, but preserving its elegantly simple early Victorian façade. Although the only main line London station not directly located on a tube line, the underground was within relatively close walking distance to this intensively worked station. Like Kings Cross, I admire Fenchurch Street Station for its elegant simplicity.

What could be better than one Deltic? Why two, of course! Here 55021 Argyle & Sutherland Highlander (foreground) and 55018 Ballymoss (background) occupy arrival platforms with trains in from Scotland. These were two of the unfortunate Deltics not preserved. Even at rest, these wonderful beasts had a sense of urgency about them and it was always a treat to see them, especially at speed.

Likewise, I couldn't wait to see many of the great railway bridges that I had read about for years. The great Firth of Forth bridge is magnificent but my preference ran to the many brick viaducts that cover the country, Ribbleshead being one of my great favorites. While the Forth bridge is monumental and completely dominates the landscape, viaducts tend to be somewhat more subtle and form a more organic component of the landscape without dominating it – a delightfully subtle reminder that one is in the UK without the necessity of blazoning the announcement in neon lights.

An appreciation of the subtleties of signalling and the trains themselves would take a bit longer. Oh, I could tell what a British locomotive looked like and pretty reliably separate British machines from those of the French, Germans, Italians, etc. but little did I know what lurked beneath the label of “British” – wonderful machines of the LNER, GWR,



To the best of my knowledge, Fenchurch Street did not host any locomotive hauled trains, all of its intense activity being handled by electric multiple unit sets. Here, set 308165 approaches Fenchurch Street on 23 January 1989, running parallel to the line of the new (1987) Docklands Light Railway



LMS, and to a lesser extent to a foreigner, the SR. I shall not indulge in the heresy of mentioning the LNER too many times in the *'Donkey'* but go on to say that I early-on did extensive reading on the history of the Great Eastern Railway, Claud Hamiltons, A4s, and Britannias.

My first exposure to *Oliver Cromwell* was at Bressingham – akin to seeing a tiger pent up at the zoo – and subsequent photos in the British railway press of this wonderful locomotive again released again to main line operation and in full cry put a wrap-around grin on my face. Sadly, this was all in the future because main line steam was essentially dead in 1971. If one wanted to see steam, one went to a preserved railway – or to Aberystwyth to see British Rail's last outpost of steam.

British coaching stock was another bit of novel adventure for me. I don't recall ever experiencing "slam door" stock in the United States. It seemed quite ubiquitous during my two postings – both on suburban (especially) and main line stock. It took a bit of getting used to at first, but I soon became adept with a back-hand the equal of any Brit and could board or de-board a train in an instant. From reading the periodic care packages that I receive from the UK, I am nearly certain that the last slam door stock disappeared from main line rails in 1995. Hence, what still exists is only to be found on preserved railways – and in our memories.

Of Sleepers and Pullmans.

My wife and I had our first real holiday in the UK in July of 1971. Traveling up to London from Cambridge to Kings Cross, we made our way to Euston to take a sleeping car on the 00.50 ex Euston for Liverpool. Arriving at the uncivilized hour of 04.08, we slept in aboard our carriage and later made our way to a ferry for the Isle of Man. It was a clear, brisk day and I quite enjoyed the short sea voyage. My wife didn't share my enjoyment and spent most of her time below decks as close to the center of gravity of the ship as she could get to minimize the threat of sea sickness that threatened to attack her with every roll of the vessel. Finally reaching terra firma again, we booked into our hotel and spent the next several days exploring the delights of the Victorian steam railway, the horse drawn trams, and the Manx Electric Ry.

We did other interesting things on the island, such as visiting the great Laxey Wheel, but I paid dearly for my railway outings when Donna made it quite clear we were flying back to Liverpool and not using the ferry. Ouch! Our trip back to Cambridge was uneventful, but in the course of our holiday I

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The Settle & Carlisle is one of my favorite lines in the UK. Bless the many people who labored for so long to save it from abandonment. Ribbleshead Viaduct was thus a "must see" item during a holiday to northern England that my wife Donna & I had with Dave & Barbara Theobald in September of 2000. In a turn about from our usual modus operandi, our wives rode the train from Appleby (where we were staying) into Carlisle to shop and sightsee whilst Dave & I took the rental car to go gricing on 11 September 2000. The weather during most of our holiday ranged from dreary to wet, but we had sunny weather when we needed it most – at Ribbleshead! While I'd have preferred a 47 or 56 on the point of the goods train depicted here, any well lit locomotive in sunshine was a good locomotive. It turned out that EMD had followed me from America, but EWS "Shed" 66019 southbound at 13.42 was still a treat. Our driving that day was tenuous at best as Britain had just been hit by a nationwide petrol lorry drivers strike. What joy! It turned out that what seemed a genuine bother at the time paled into total insignificance exactly one year later when terrorists flew two passenger airliners into the World Trade Center building in New York City – changing the pattern of air travel into the indefinite future.



The great train shed of Liverpool Lime Street Station was our entrance and exit to Beatles Land and ultimately to the Isle of Man. Our arrival in Liverpool was at such an early hour that it was impossible to observe the great cuttings through which the railway descended to bring us into the city. Our homeward journey was ever more interesting because I was able to observe these great feats of Victorian railway engineering as we departed the city.

had decided that if traveling by Pullman sleeper was nice, traveling by a named Pullman train would be even nicer.



The cure for “lack-of-steamitis” turned out to be a holiday to Wales in late May/early June of 1972. The track gauges were all wrong but the smells and sounds were delightfully right. My wife could scarce contain her joy riding on the Ffestiniog, Tallylyn, Snowdon Mountain, and Vale of Rheidol Railways. On 28 May 1972, we planned to ride on the Snowdon Mountain Ry. to the top of the mountain. Alas, our plans were scuttled by the weather. I should have known from my experience with the Mt. Washington Cog Railway in the state of New Hampshire back in the states that mountain cog railways such as the Snowdon were held hostage to weatherman. Our trip behind SMRy 6 Padarn on 28 May 1972 unfortunately took us about half way up the mountain. Here, our train is seen backing down to accept its load of disappointed passengers back to the base station, the weather on the mountain ahead being too ugly to permit completion of a visit to the top.

The weather had improved a bit by 1 June 1972, making our trip on the Vale of Rheidol as somewhat more pleasant experience – and allowing us to ride all the way to the Devil’s Bridge end of the line. I was intrigued by the 1’ 11 ¾” inch gauge of the line (why not an even 2’ like the Maine “two-footers” back home?) but such is the stuff that makes for the spice of life.



Once safely deposited on the Isle of Man by our ferry from Liverpool, the decision on where to start was pretty easy – with the delightful little engines of the Isle of Man Railway, each one looking as if they were ex-works. Certainly stalwart 11 Maitland outshopped by Beyer, Peacock & Co. in 1905, created a wonderful time-warp image with the station master in top hat and tails having a natter with the driver before departure from Douglas on the sunny morning of 17 June 1971



My wife and I were very newlyweds when first posted to the UK in 1971. We were married on 8 Jan 1971 and I departed for the UK on 14 Feb 1971, with Donna following a bit later once I’d found a place for us to live. This bucolic scene of IOM 4 Loch seen from across the fields not far out of Douglas was the site of our first marital spat. Donna had been raised in the city of St. Louis, Missouri and had no familiarity with country settings at all. A footpath across the field in the foreground led to a wonderful vantage point for this view of the train, so I set off at a good clip expecting Donna to follow right behind – which she didn’t because there “might be snakes lurking in the grass.” No amount of persuasion could convince here that St. Patrick had passed though Douglas en route to Ireland and that there were no snakes to be had along the railway!



I had learned by this time that the *Brighton Belle* was not long for this world and thus made plans to ride it on 22 Apr 1972. I was more than a little disappointed to arrive in London only to find that a railway men's dispute on the Southern Region had caused the *Brighton Belle* service to be cancelled. As this service was scheduled to end on 30 April 1972, this put paid to my one opportunity to ride this storied train – a major disappointment.

Visit to Corfe Castle.

Q. When is a visit to Corfe Castle not a visit to Corfe Castle?

A. When it's done in fog so thick that the head of the train disappears at the end of the platform. Not too terribly long after being infected with the "ride every passenger line in the UK-itis," I noted in one of the enthusiast magazines that the Wareham-Swanage Line serving Corfe Castle was going to be abandoned. I thus planned a journey south on 4 December 1971 that would cover a significant amount of new trackage plus the Corfe Castle line that was soon to be closed. Little did I know at the time that this, among many lines that were "abandoned," would later be resurrected to new life at the hands of dedicated railway enthusiasts. At the time, though, it looked like the bitter end so I embarked on one of my Saturday extravaganza journeys.

I was off from Cambridge behind 5599 on the 09:30 departure to London (Kings Cross) and then made my way to Waterloo Station for a ride on some electric "bug boxes" to Wareham, Dorset. Everything was going nicely until I neared the south coast of Dorset and England suddenly began to disappear on me. I changed at Wareham the train to Corfe Castle and Swanage. I should have been suspicious when I saw platelayers shoveling the fog off of the permanent way that I was going to fail in my mission to see the castle. Nevertheless, I proceeded on my journey aboard BR Southern Region Class 205 DEMU Set 1104. These units worked the Swanage Line from 1966 until closure of the line in 1972, at which time there were moved to other service.

These were quite different from the "bug boxes" I'd become accustomed to seeing in East Anglia and I rather liked them. A friendly passenger aboard the train advised where the castle could have been seen had it not been shrouded in the murk. At Swanage, I photographed my train and then took a taxi to Corfe Castle with the optimistic hope of doing a bit of photography. Bad idea! I re-boarded the same set of units at the Corfe Castle stop and carried on to Wareham, where I changed to a set of main-line Southern Region "electro-bug boxes" for the journey back to London-Waterloo. As we traveled through the murk, I cogitated on the high state of development of British railways that permitted travel at night and in grotty weather without the use of headlights (and hoped that they would keep up the good work!) Making my way to Liverpool Street, I returned north to Cambridge behind trusty BR 5629.

I determined to make up for my abandoned *Brighton Belle* trip by riding the *Bristol Pullman* on 23 February 1973, as I had also read of the impending discontinuance of this train as well. This turned out to be a very long day, with a departure from Ely at 07:36 behind 6744 for the up train to London. A day spent gricing in the big city was followed by a prompt 16:45 departure from Paddington aboard the *Bristol Pullman*. As I quickly discovered, I should probably have dressed for the occasion as this was very much a businessmen's train and I certainly was not dressed as such. In furtherance of interna-



Swanage in the fog, my first encounter with a "Thumper." With the fen land bug boxes, I had developed the habit of always trying to sit behind the driver as this location usually presented a wonderful opportunity to get a driver's-eye-view of where I was headed – especially useful when traversing new territory. The approach didn't work on the Southern Region as all of their dmu's and emu's were blind-ended. Thus, I contented myself to be seated in the driving trailer of Hampshire unit 1104 and let the English Electric prime mover at the opposite end thump its little heart out.

It was a gloomy afternoon in London and Paddington Station was suitably gloomy as well. I checked at inquiries counter and was directed to the correct platform for the Bristol Pullman. At this late date, the poor old train was looking a bit worn and tatty. My photo of the train set (W60096, W60647, W60737, W60746, W60736, W60646, W60090) shows the lead unit's nose looking time-worn and a bit dented. Still, I was comfortably ensconced aboard W60090 for our prompt 16:45 departure from Paddington and on-time arrival at Bristol at 18:30. Never one to cut things too close, I was away from Bristol at 18:35 behind BR 1937, a trusty if mundane (compared to the Pullman) Class 47 that returned me to Paddington at 20:50.



tional relations, I pretended to be a Russian instead of an American.

The *Bristol Pullman* was not withdrawn until May of 1973, but this time I was lucky to ride it with no difficulty. The return trip from Bristol to Paddington was behind 1937. A 23:14 ex Liverpool Street departure behind 1743 saw me arriving safely back in Ely at the unholy hour of 01:03. I think, given the choice of riding the *Brighton Belle* or the *Bristol Pullman*, I'd have chosen the wonderful old electric cars. However, fate may have worked in my favor. Though the *Bristol Pullman* has long ago become razor blades, my understanding is that a dedicated group of enthusiasts had restored an entire train set of *Brighton Belle* cars that will hopefully again be fit for main line service in 2013.

To be continued.

On the Cambrian Coast Express – to Norton Fitzwarren

Tim Edmonds

The West Somerset Railway's autumn gala in 2013 had a Cambrian Railways theme. To achieve this the railway had assembled an impressive array of appropriate motive power, including four of the Manor 4-6-0s that were for long associated with the Cambrian, and 5029 *Nunney Castle* dressed-up as classmate 5026 *Criccieth Castle*. There was even a visiting narrow-gauge loco on display, in the form of ex-Corris Railway 0-4-2ST *Sir Haydn*. A nice touch was the renaming of stations with Cambrian line running-in boards. So Minehead, as the terminus, became Pwllheli and Bishops Lydeard became Shrewsbury. The intermediate stations were renamed in line with some appropriate characteristic so Dunster, with its castle, was Criccieth and Watchet, with its harbour, was Aberdovey (although incorrectly spelt on the boards as 'Aberdyfi', which as far as I know has never been used for the station name). This was a four-day gala, with an intensive timetable from Thursday to Sunday. Thursday brought large quantities of authentic Welsh rain, but the weather improved on Friday and the weekend was hot and sunny.

One of the return trains on Saturday was billed in the timetable as the *Cambrian Coast Express* and it was to omit intermediate stops, except passing stations. The working timetable in the programme showed this would also run through to Norton Fitzwarren, giving a rare opportunity to travel on that section of line. Veronica and I decided to travel on this train, making sure we arrived in time to get decent seats on the 'sea view' side of the train. The up train was in the hands of 7822 *Foxcote Manor*, complete with headboard. Departure time was 11:55 and the somewhat leisurely journey over long single-line sections and passing loops gave an authentic Cambrian line feeling to proceedings. A visit to the buffet car showed that considerable thought had gone into the details of the gala, with menus being bi-lingual and the fare available including Welsh cakes and beer brewed in Oswestry.



The Cambrian Coast Express headboard displayed on 7812 after arrival at Minehead.

All photos by Tim Edmonds

Rover tickets included travel onwards from Bishops Lydeard to Norton Fitzwarren which, with its turning triangle, represented the Abbey Foregate curve at Shrewsbury (stretching belief a bit, I know, but all quite acceptable in the spirit of the event). The train stopped at Norton Platform, and our position one coach from the back meant that our nearest door was conveniently at the north end of the platform, close to where 7812 *Erlestoke Manor* was waiting to take over the return. This was our first visit to Norton Fitzwarren since 1988, when we were passengers on the first train to use the link from the WSR into the premises of what was then the Taunton Cider factory. The train was the not very inspiringly named *Swindon Post House Explorer* and was part of a weekend event organised by Bill Alborough of TEFS and the enterprising manager of the Swindon Post House Hotel, one Nigel Dobbing. Nigel's success with organising special trains led him to move full-time into that business. He went on to set up The Railway Touring Company, of which he is still Director.

The triangle layout at Norton Fitzwarren allows a loco to run round via the east side or to turn using the south and west sides. On arrival 7822 ran round the train to back up tender-to-tender behind 7812, which then ran under Norton Road bridge to Allerford Junction and reversed onto the front of our train. The headboard was transferred from loco to loco and at 13:50 we were on our way. With seats now at the front of the train we were treated to a sound feast as 7812 barked up the bank to Crowcombe (Talerddig), but this was put in the shade by a superb attack up the 1 in 74 to Washford (Machynlleth) which was passed at a lively pace. It was all great fun!

On the turntable road at Minehead, 7812 Erlestoke Manor passes Corris Railway 3 Sir Haydn, displayed on a flat wagon.



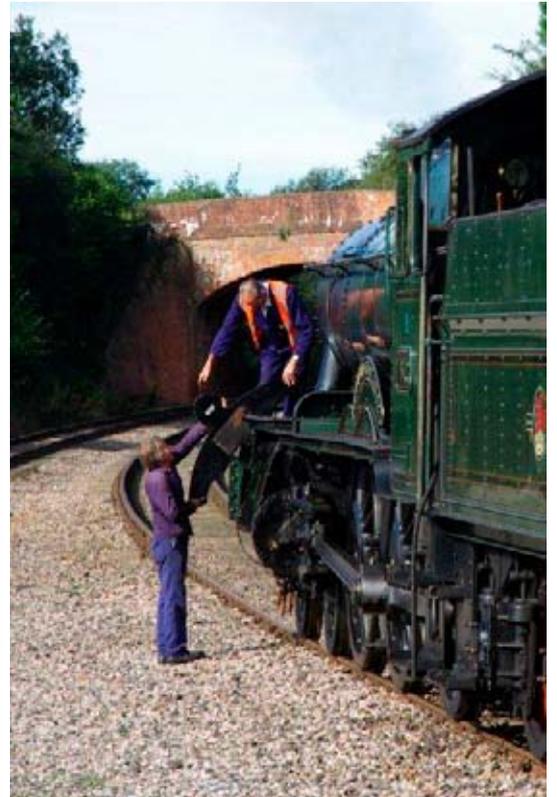


Having arrived at Norton Fitzwarren, 7822 Foxcote Manor completes its run-round and passes the recycled ballast heap.

Once the return Cambrian Coast Express has departed, it will be turned on the triangle ready to head the next Minehead-bound train facing the right way.



7812 Erlestoke Manor heads towards Allerford Junction, just beyond the Norton Road bridge, from where it will reverse onto the train at Norton Fitzwarren platform to form the 13.50 Cambrian Coast Express to Minehead.



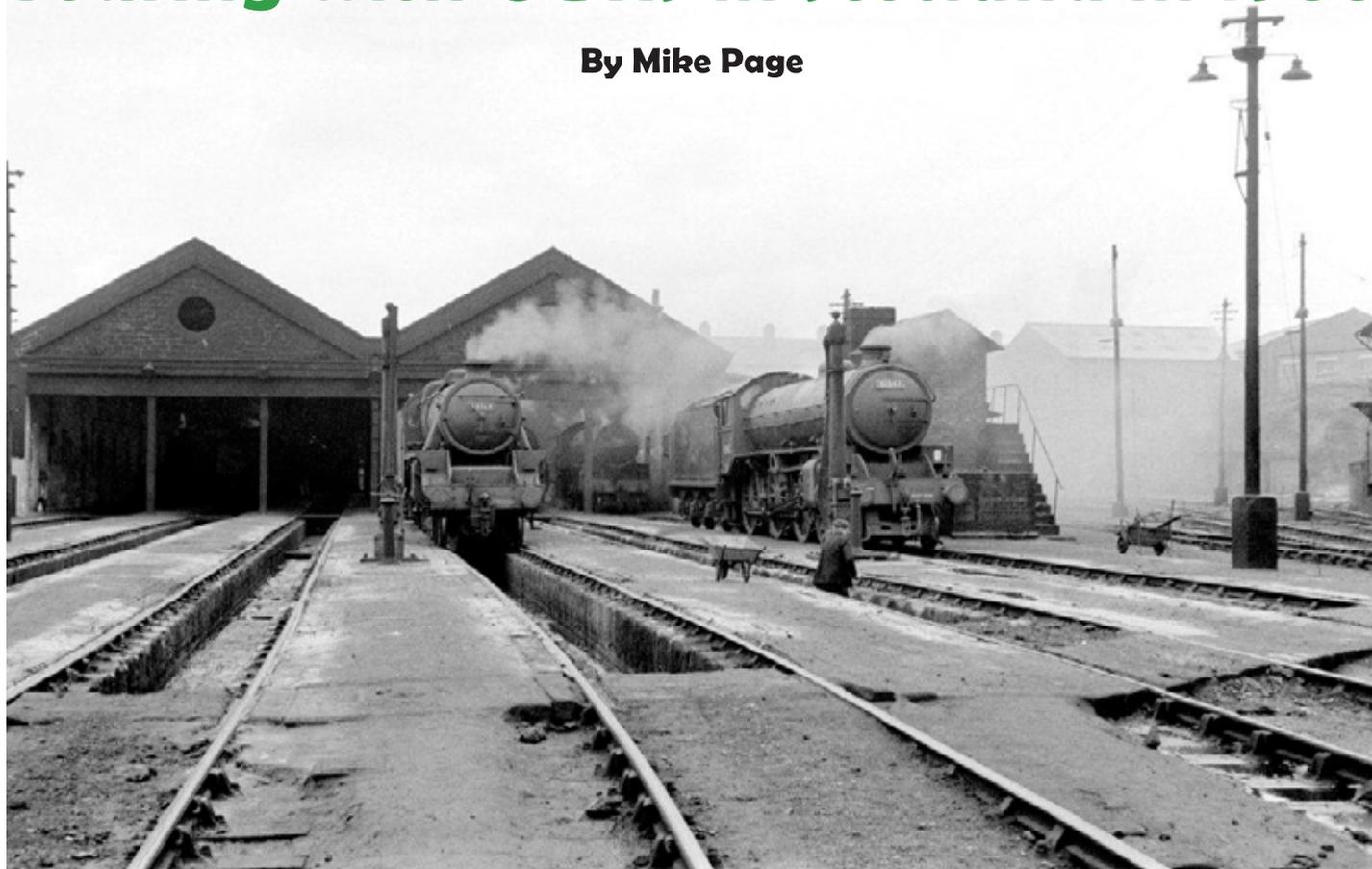
Having been removed from 7822, the Cambrian Coast Express headboard is about to be fitted to 7812 standing at the Norton Fitzwarren platform.

It was all so different at Norton Fitzwarren 25 years ago – here 2-8-0 53808 is tender-first for the return Swindon Post House Explorer from the now demolished Taunton Cider factory.



Touring with OURS in Scotland in 1966

By Mike Page



Mike concludes the story of the Oxford University Railway Society's annual 'tour' for 1966 in Scotland, where steam was fighting a rear-guard action and diesel reliability was improving.

On our return to Tay Bridge yard, and with some daylight left, we took trips to Tayport (DMU), a line that was closed by the end of the year. We also went to Markinch (D5306 going one way and returning with a DMU). It was dark by the time we were taken by a D5300er back to Perth, before which we saw 60530 take out an up fitted freight, 73149 with an up load of ballast and 62B's 60919 going to the shed.

Back at Perth there were similar movements as the evening before with 60024 appearing on the mails again and 70033 going light to shed. 61262 had not finished her day's chores as she came through light engine at 20.49. Quite a varied day and enjoyed by all!

On Wednesday, we reached Edinburgh travelling by DMU via Bridge of Earn, Glenfarg, Milnathort and Kinross. We were travelling along what was the Kinross-shire Railway. The Perth-Cowdenbeath section was closed on January 5, 1970. At Kinross Junction we met 62A's J38 65909 with a local freight and at Kinross, D5304 assisted by a Sulzer 2 passed on an Edinburgh – Inverness service. Our DMU took us on through Loch Leven to Cowdenbeath, Dunfermline and Inverkeithing where Dunfermline (62C)'s J35 64623 was busy shunting the yard.

As we approached Edinburgh, Haymarket shed (64B) was full of Type 2s and Type 4s. From Waverley Station, the 'complimentary' Rolls-Bentley transport took us to St, Margarets MPD where the only ex-NBR locomotive present was J36 65234 in steam as stationary boiler in the remains of the old small round-house.

Standard and Fairburn 2-6-4Ts, Stanier 'Black Fives' and a pair of Thompson B1s were the main occupants of St. Margarets MPD on March 16, 1966. Dalry Road MPD's 45168 and 64A's 61347 pose outside the running shed.

WD 2-8-0s were handling much of the coal trains from the collieries around Thornton. 90444 is ready for work while 90600 takes on coal at the coaling tower on March 16, 1966.



On shed were 32 locos including 60052 *Prince Palatine* undergoing light repairs and 60041 *Salmon Trout* standing cold. There were also five V2s, five B1s, 10 'Black Fives', three Fairburn Class 4 2-6-4Ts and three Standard Class 4 2-6-4Ts. Of the V2s, 60976 from Gateshead (52A) had recently arrived and was being coaled and serviced.

We drove on to 62C, which produced one J35, one J38, one Standard 4 2-6-0, five WD 2-8-0s and four North British diesel shunters (D2707/16-18). Our final call was 62A (Thornton Junction): a very large straight shed now looking very sparsely populated with 21 locos present. Among these were seven J38s, five J35s, five WDs, three B1s and, acting as stationary boiler, J36 65327. The only diesel in sight was D2750. Then inside the repair shop we found D3342 and 65934. Nearby the store line contained two J38s, one J35 and one WD. Among the J35s on shed was 64588, which was to take us for a trip down the Leslie branch.

We drove back to Markinch to await the Leslie goods, which duly arrived with 64588 towing one load of coal and two brake vans. Facing south, the Leslie branch curved sharply to the west tending to follow the rolling hills' contours before dropping down into a river valley and stopping on a curving viaduct. The town of Leslie faced us across the deep narrow river valley. The guard screwed the van's brakes down hard and then the crew uncoupled 64588. Realising what was to happen we got off to photograph the 64588 leaving its train to cross the viaduct into the goods yard. The guard then carefully released his brake until the train slowly freewheeled under gravity into the station yard.

It appeared from the five unloaded and tarpaulined stacks of timber in the station yard that today, that with just one coal wagon, 64588 was having an easy time of it! After some shunting, 64588 was ready to take the coal wagon and the brake van down to a paper mill along a short branch of a mile or so. The J35 sorted some wagons at the paper mill then returned with three empty mineral wagons. Once the train was made up it was my turn to ride 64588's footplate with two others of our group back up the hill to Markinch. The crew did not think the job would last much longer. Eventually the branch closed on October 10, 1967. The line had lost its passenger service back in 1932.

We bade farewell to the crew and caught a DMU to Dundee. On our arrival we found 60919 heading the 17.42 semi-fast to Edinburgh so we all made the snap decision to join the train for a steam ride over the Tay Bridge back to Markinch! Well, one does these things! So again, we returned in a DMU back to Dundee then D5341 took us 'home' back to the Perth YHA.



Locos being prepared in Thornton shed yard on March 16, 1966 include (left to right) J35 64570, J38 65907, J35 64588 and WD 90600.



Arrival at Leslie: 64588 scampers off to the station yard before the guard releases his brake to allow the short train to freewheel down to the station on March 16, 1966.

Down a short branch from Leslie lay this paper mill where 64588 shunts coal wagons on March 16, 1966.



Thursday's 'grice' was to include brake van rides from Montrose to Inverbervie and back and then to the Bridge of Dun. When we reached Perth Station, 12A's 70052 was attaching herself to an up parcels train while 61B's 60004 *William Whitelaw* looked as though she had just uncoupled from the 06.10 train from Aberdeen. We were beginning to feel like commuters as again we joined a train for Dundee (DMU) to connect with an Edinburgh-Aberdeen train in charge of 64B's D263.

D263 dropped us at Montrose where the sole occupant of the two-road shed was 62A's 64577. We returned to the station where D263 and D361 came by with Aberdeen-Edinburgh up and down expresses before 64577 appeared tender-first pulling three vans, two tarpaulined open wagons and two brake vans. Our only 'drop-off' was one van left at North Water Bridge. We had nothing for the other stations. It was a very enjoyable trundle always within sight of the North Sea until eventually we reached Inverbervie snuggled at the head of a coastal inlet.

The engine crew and guard relaxed with tea while three of us walked up a field to get coastal shots of 64577 once she had started shunting. We returned with two vans, the crew stopping at the various closed stations to let us take photos, apart from at Johnshaven where two more vans were added. We considered ourselves lucky to have had the ride to Inverbervie as the line closed before 1966 was out. The passenger service had been withdrawn back in 1951.

Lunchtime was spent back at Montrose Station while 64577 shunted the yard and made up a freight of some 20 vans and mineral wagons to take to Bridge of Dun and Brechin. 64577 had no business at Dubton where we joined the ex Caledonian line from Aberdeen. This short stretch of line succumbed in 1981, while the passenger service had gone in 1951. 64577 left for Brechin, which today is the headquarters of the Caledonian Railway (Brechin) Ltd. Preservation group.

We waited for the 13.30 Aberdeen-Glasgow, which to our delight produced a quite clean 60019 *Bittern*. The A4 gave us the expected very smart run to Glasgow Buchanan Street, much of which we spent in the buffet car celebrating our luck. The 'direct' Caledonian main



J35 64577 was the sole occupant of the two-road sub-shed at Montrose on March 17, 1966.

After arriving at Bridge of Dun from Montrose via Dubton, 64577 prepares to leave for Brechin on March 17, 1966.



line from Perth to Aberdeen forward from Stanley Junction closed to passengers on September 4, 1967 and freight on June 5, 1982.

In Glasgow we shared a taxi across to St. Enoch Station to catch a DMU to Ayr where we stayed in a YHA hostel. There was still steam to be seen at St. Enoch such as Corkerhill (67A)'s 80112 on the 17.55 to Kilmacolm. Also from 67A, 80047 brought in empty stock for a local train while 78026 was station pilot. From Dumfries (67E), 76074 waited with a parcels train.

Our train to Ayr was a DMU and on the way we got our first sighting of a Clayton diesel, D8511, on a down freight near Dalry where Ayr's 'Crab' 2-6-0 42863 stood light engine. At the time only 25 or so 'Crabs' were left in BR service and of these, 13 were stationed at Ayr (67C). We passed another, 42913 on a down freight at Troon.

The object of going to Ayr was to experience a brake van ride on the Waterside branch next day, Friday. We picked up a DMU at Ayr Station where Hurlford's 80091 was seen with a parcels train. 76076 of Sutton Oak (8G) stood cold in the shed yard, presumably on her way to the breaker's yard in Troon. We caught up with 80091 at Newton-on-Ayr where she was shunting her parcels vans while 67C's 42913 was waiting to pick up the empties for Waterside.



After arrival at Inverbervie, the crew of 64577 are drinking tea while a local railwayman checks his Morris Minor.



60019 Bittern arrives at Bridge of Dun with the 13.30 Aberdeen – Glasgow (Buchanan Street) on March 17, 1966.

Two of our small party joined the footplate crew (after drawing lots!) then we picked up some 40 empty mineral wagons. We retraced the route through Ayr and accessed the Waterside branch at Dalrymple Junction. On the way we met 67B's 76021 leaving Ayr Station on the 08.50 local to Kilmarnock.

Once past Dalrymple Junction, 42913 had to slog uphill all the way. We felt envious of our two colleagues on the footplate as we shared tea with the guard. We arrived at Waterside where the coal washeries were being fed with coal by trainloads from the collieries hauled by Barclay 0-6-0Ts and 0-4-0Ts. Officially, the OURS tour finished after Waterside and the other four members left with 42913. I checked with the driver who assured me that another train would be coming up in about 2h. So I spent some time walking the trackbed to Dalmelington terminus and photographing the Barclay locos on the nearby NCB trackage. Dalmelington lost its passengers on April 6, 1964 and the track was lifted back to Waterside. The colliery lines and Waterside branch to Ayr are still in use serving open mines nearby.

As forecast, Ayr's 42863 brought in more empties to Waterside and half-an-hour or so later I rode with the crew on 42863's footplate back towards Ayr. The driver slowed the train sufficiently for me to hop off onto Ayr station. I now still had another day available on my 'Freedom of Scotland' ticket through to Midnight on Saturday. I decided to head for Carlisle and get a night train to Inverness and a day train to Wick and back!

It was a bouncy ride in a railbus from Ayr to Kilmarnock and we passed an incoming local headed by 80031 from Kilmarnock at Newton-on-Ayr. I had

about 20min at Kilmarnock where 67B's 77018 came through light engine followed by 76021. The latter was shunting in Newton-on-Ayr and so must have deposited a freight in Kilmarnock's yards, which were being shunted by D3939 and D3415.

My train was a Glasgow-Leeds pulled by D21 and on the way to Dumfries we only passed one freight with 67E's 44699. Passing the MPD at Dumfries only revealed 45489 stored and 44785 shunting. Carlisle Station was quiet until D1851 arrived with my train from Manchester to Glasgow Central. Then from Buchanan Street, two D5300ers took my train to Inverness.

As expected, Inverness was steamless that early Saturday morning, but the sun was out! I had a 20min connection with the

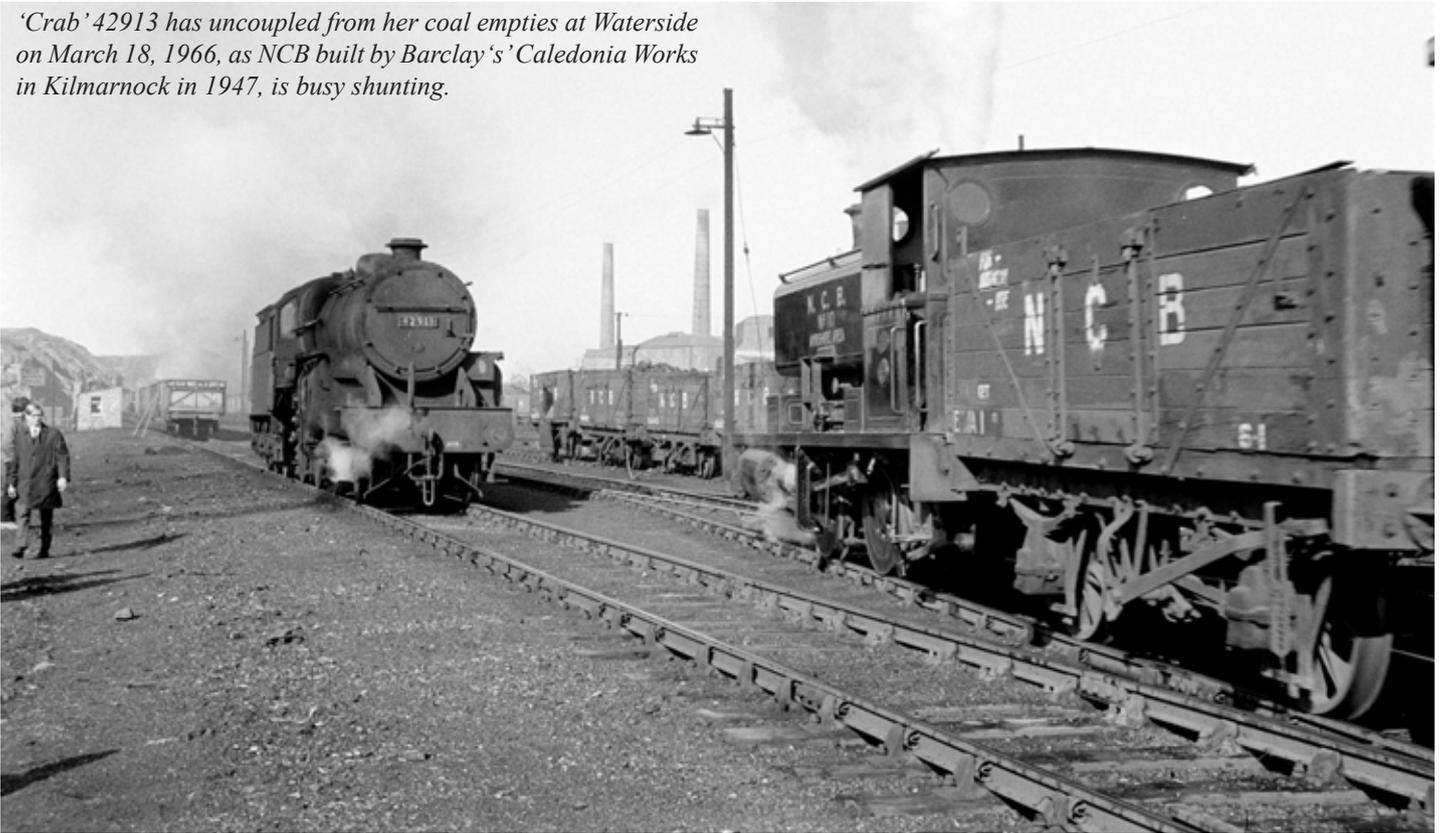
06.10 Inverness-Wick pulled by 60A's D5324. The line made two forays into high moorland between Cultrain and The Mound and then between Helmsdale and Malkirk. The morning was just perfect for leaning out of the window of a Mark 1 coach to enjoy the wild scenery. The train had a buffet that also served up bacon & eggs. A very enjoyable experience tucking in while the Highlands passed by at an enjoyable viewing pace.

A DMU waited for Thurso passengers at Georgemas Junction and I had 30min or so to explore Wick and its harbour before we left again, still with D5324 at 11.10. We were climbing now up onto the high moorland with mountain peaks, some with snow, on its fringes. D5324 had made a big deal out of lifting our five coaches up the gradients as I demolished what was really the freshest and best Angus steak I had ever tasted!



The 'Bobby' has already dropped the 'peg' on the bracket signal as 42913 begins the long slog up to waterside at Dalrymple Junction on March 18, 1966.

'Crab' 42913 has uncoupled from her coal empties at Waterside on March 18, 1966, as NCB built by Barclay's Caledonia Works in Kilmarnock in 1947, is busy shunting.



Things began to sound worrying as we toiled up the bank out of The Mound. D5324 was down to walking pace with the driver constantly letting the engine rev down and rev up. Maybe the engine, or traction motors, were overheating. So he must have heaved a great sigh of relief when we reached the summit!

Back at Inverness I caught the 16.25 Inverness – Glasgow/Edinburgh in the hands of D5123 + D5343. We left on time passing D8032+D8033 on snowplough duty and D5341 waiting to follow with a freight. After we had passed D5328 on a down freight at Carr Bridge, darkness drew in, so I dozed to Buchanan Street, then headed for Glasgow Central to board the 21.45 Glasgow-London for the journey to Crewe. I envied the passengers of an arriving train from London headed by 70046 piloting a D200er.

My last observation of any note was to 'finish off' my Britannias! The train had halted at Carstairs and in walked 12A's 70006 with an up milk train. My penultimate Britannia 'cop' had been back in May 1962 when I saw 70035 at Doncaster. 70006 had eluded me for nearly four years from when she was transferred to the Midland Region in 1963.

Well, in memory of the defunct OURS that week's experience was truly enjoyable as well as educational. Like the North Eastern Railway's surviving Q6 0-8-0s and J27 0-6-0s working around West Hartlepool, Sunderland and Blyth in 1966, the Fifeshire coalfields supported British Rail's other pockets of pre-grouping locomotive operation, the ex-NBR J35s and a few J36s. All had disappeared by the end of 1967.

NCB No. 21 brings more coal wagons to the washery at Waterside followed by a fellow Barclay 0-4-0T behind on March 18, 1966.

