

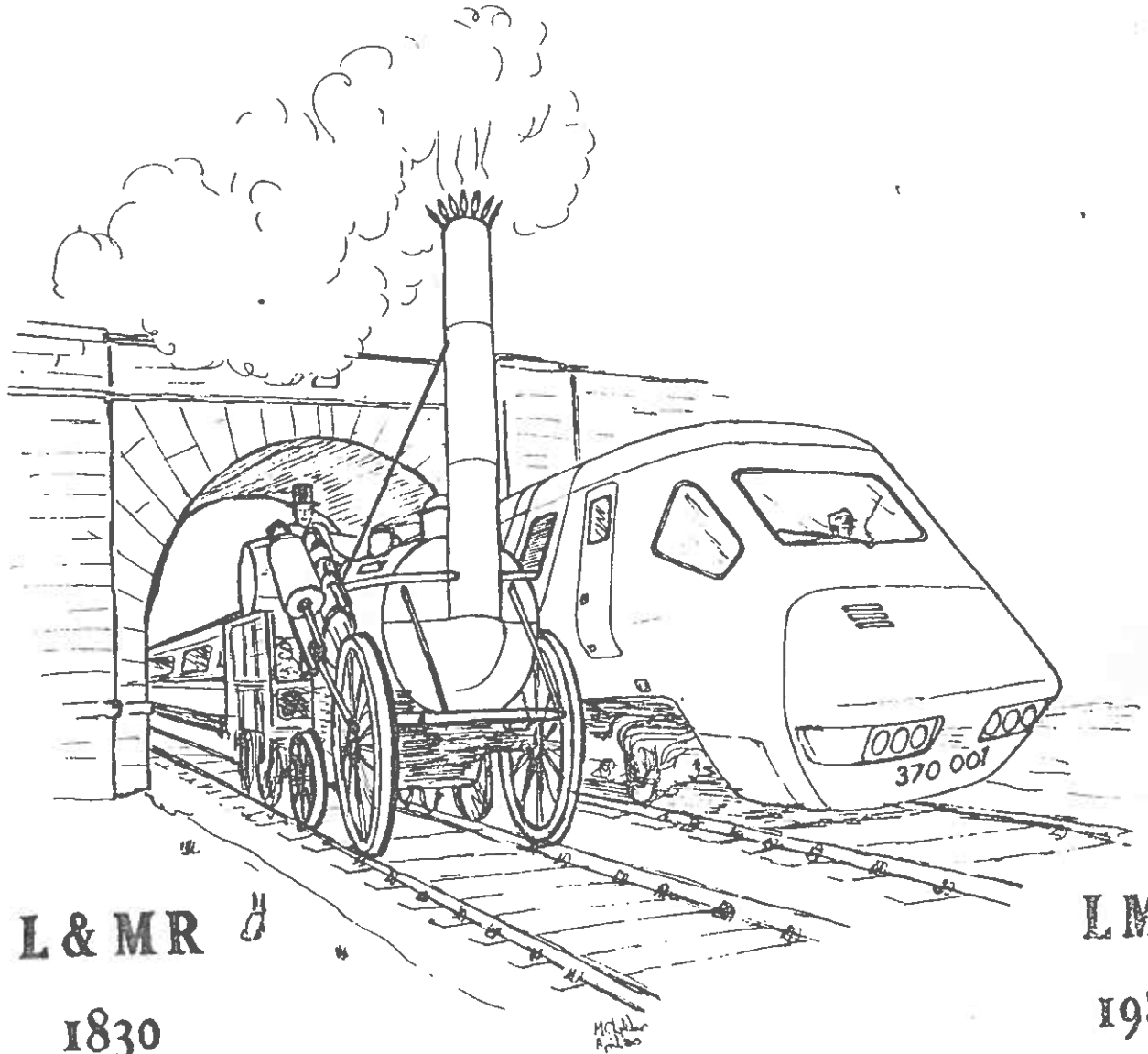
*Marlow & District
Railway Society*

Please reply to:

THE MARLOW DONKEY NO 15

JUNE 1980

ROCKET 150



L & MR

1830

LME

1980

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

It was good that so many of our Society's members could be present at Rainhill to watch the cavalcade formation of the Rocket 150 celebrations. As is customary in our group the Editor has nominated a victim to write at length on the happenings of the Spring Bank Holiday weekend so I will limit my comments accordingly.

On the journey north our intrepid travellers called in at Edge Hill Visitors' Centre. A very small but well-displayed collection was on view in the 1836 block on the south platform. The Rail Trail directed our party to the cutting so familiar to admirers of Ackermann's prints. The Moorish Arch has gone but the cave-like apertures which housed boilers, stores and repair shops are still to be seen. The right-hand tunnel of the three at the end of the cutting, namely the entrance to Crown Street Station, has been cleared and visitors can walk to the far end where 1 8 2 9 is carved across the roof. The remains of Stephenson's pulley system are in the centre tunnel where loaded wagons were hauled up from Wapping Goods Station. BR has not used this cutting for twenty years and the local children seem keen to refill it with any available refuse.

The media must have been disappointed that everything went so well at the Cavalcade weekend. The Rocket replica did manage to derail herself three times on the Saturday and Sans Pareil needed a gentle nudge from Lion on the Sunday afternoon. Spectators who grew up during the last twenty years of steam must have been amazed at the spotless liveries of the locomotives which emerged from the sidings of Bold Colliery. Cleanliness in the 20's and 30's was taken for granted as the norm and in those days the old familiar colours were a joy to behold.

BR invested a great deal of money into celebrating the opening of the Liverpool-Manchester line and much careful planning went into making the event a great success.

As an added bonus our party visited Steampoint, Southport, but of course Lion and the Jinty were not at home. Black 5 Magpie was propelled into the yard for our closer inspection. Later the group called at Dinting. Bittern and Bahamas were sulking as if they knew their more glamorous sisters were being shown off at Rainhill. Blue Peter also looked dejected as Scots Guardsman chugged up and down a siding with truck-loads of passengers.

To send trains of the 1980's speeding through tunnels of the middle 1800's seems a worrying feature of modern railway practice. I refer specifically to the fate of two young railwaymen now forever entombed in Penmanshiel Tunnel, near Cockburnspath, Berwickshire, where they were doing maintenance work when there was a rock fall. Bridges always appear relatively simple to inspect and repair; tunnels on the other hand are far more difficult to examine and the majority have been in constant use for a great many years. Perhaps I malign the efficiency and thoroughness of our civil engineers.

Let us hope magistrates will deal severely with vandals on the line. This is a problem which recurs periodically. Throwing missiles from railway bridges and viaducts can be bad enough but if each school holiday brings about sleepers and lengths of rail being placed across busy tracks sooner or later there will be a serious accident with loss of life. This type of senseless behaviour is a comparatively new feature in our society and has developed more frighteningly as train speeds have increased. As has been shown with football hooligans soft treatment does not remedy matters. Let the punishments be severe enough to deter other mindless youngsters.

THURSDAY NIGHT PROGRAMME FOR 1980 AT 1945 FOR 2000 HRS

- 17 Jul "Rocket 150" Members talk with slides of their experiences at the celebrations in May 1980.
- Aug It is hoped that an evening visit can be made to a modern BR Depot on either 14 or 21 August.
- 18 Sep Autumn Film Show featuring : "Steam upon Severn" - "Rail 150" - "Snow" - "The Elephant will never forget" - "Didcot Museum and the GWS".
- 16 Oct To be arranged.
- 20 Nov To be arranged.
- 18 Dec Christmas Film Show. Provisionally "The Ghost Train" with Arthur Askey.

It is hoped that either the November or October dates will be a series of 10 minutes talks by members. Please give your names to Stan Verrinder who has three volunteers (?) already.

SOCIETY VISITS

Chinnor Branch Line

Last minute bookings can be taken for this visit which is on 21 June 1980. For details see "Marlow Donkey" No. 14.

Mid Hants Railway

We will be visiting this railway by double deck bus on Sunday 20 July 1980. Leave Stoke Mandeville 0830 High Wycombe 0900 Marlow Donkey 0930; return to Marlow by 1930 High Wycombe 2000 and Stoke Mandeville 2030. In the afternoon it is hoped to visit the Tasker traction engine museum at Winchester with the option to visit Winchester itself. Fares Adults £3 Children 5 to 15 £1.50 - inclusive of the rail fare but not including the museum. Bookings to Stan Verrinder as soon as possible as there are only a few seats left.

Steam Town Carnforth

Our friends Chiltern Trains are organising a rail excursion on Bank Holiday Sunday 24 August from Wycombe line stations. Details yet to be confirmed but Roger Bowen hopes to organise a party on this train. Please contact him for further details.

CHRISTMAS DINNER

Our annual Christmas Dinner will be at the "Blue Flag" Cadmore End on Friday 19 December 1980. We had a waiting list last year so please book early with Mike Norris so that you will not be disappointed.

MMPA EXCURSIONS

27 Jul Torquay and Paignton

7 Sep Plymouth

EXCURSIONS FROM WYCOMBE LINE

The list of excursions to be operated by Chiltern Trains (1 Druids Walk, Chinnor, tel: Kingston Blount 52198) in the "Marlow Donkey" No. 14 should be amended as follows:

Sun 27 Jul Ruabon or Chester - various options from £5.75 to £7.90 inclusive coach to Bala Lake Railway and visit to Llangollen Railway Society.

Wed 30 Jul Margate £4.50 Adults £3.30 Children.

Sun 24 Aug Steam Town Carnforth

Sat 20 Sep Due to shortage of diesel engines in Scotland this tour will now be to BREL Glasgow and Glasgow Transport Museum.

Sat 4 Oct Blackpool Illuminations.

One excursion is being run by LNER Society Little Tile House, Nightingales Lane, Chalfont, St. Giles, tel: Little Chalfont 2952.

Sat 27 Sep Carnforth Ravenglass or Blackpool from £6.75 to £9.75 according to option.

BR's own excursions are:

Sun 20 Jul Chester £5.50.
 Thu 31 Jul Tenby £6.60
 Wed 6 Aug Bournemouth Poole and Weymouth £5.50.
 Sun 17 Aug Isle of Wight £5.50.
 Sat 27 Sep Stratford-upon-Avon £4.00.
 Sat 11 Oct Blackpool Illuminations £7.00.
 Sat 15 Nov York £6.00.
 Sat 13 Dec Birmingham £4.00.

EVENING CLASSES

Your secretary will be tutoring two classes on the subject of "Railways of Bucks" commencing in September. On Mondays the venue is the Grange Secondary School, Wendover Way, Aylesbury - details from Mrs. M. Boait, 224A Wendover Road, Weston Turville Tel: Stoke Mandeville 3346. On Wednesdays the venue is the Chalfonts County Secondary School - details from Mr. J. Tubby The Climb Gold Hill, North Chalfont, St. Peter, Tel: Gerrards Cross 83918. Provisionally it is hoped to repeat the course on Mondays from January 1981 at the Roans County Secondary School, Amersham.

OTHER SOCIETY NEWS

The last three Thursday night meetings have seen record attendances with an average of nearly 40. The March meeting on track development on BR for high speed running with Harold Jenkins promised to be a technical but dull meeting. How wrong can you be for it turned out as very entertaining and at the same time highly informative. Colin Garratt returned to Marlow in April to give one of his usual highly polished performances when speaking of his adventures in South America. It is hoped that he will pay another visit next year. We had the pleasure in May of listening to Harold Bonnett a lifetime railwayman now retired who spoke on LNER locos. He endeared himself to a largely GWR audience with his affectionate reminiscences of the mid 1920s.

The following new members are welcomed to the Society, G.F. Andrews, J.M. Chapman, J. Davies, G. Lowe, M. Moss, J.R. Peacock and D. Wheeler. We now have two father and son combinations and 2 sets of brothers; the Costellos and Wheelers plus the Hatfields and Summers. The railway disease obviously runs in families.

Rocket 150 is heavily featured in this edition and we have a special front cover drawn by Mike Walker.. Alan Wheeler's free rendering of Rocket is on display in our HQ's window.

Our usual summer trip on the river is not taking place this year as Ted Gregory who has organised it is joining Fawley Railway as a member of the permanent staff.

The Fawley project is making good progress and any new or old members who wish to join in should contact Steve Medway. He has written an article in this edition and we are lucky in having such an enthusiastic co-ordinator.

FAWLEY RAILWAY NOTES - Contributed by Steve Medway

Much has happened at Fawley since the last News Letter as many aching backs and blistered hands will testify. As was to be expected much work has been done on preparing the trackbed and track and the results are now very much in evidence.

Someone up above must have thought of the line as His Wonderful Railway (must be the day on which we work) as to date we have had good weather on every single Sunday but one, which was even then not bad enough to stop work.

So far we have only failed to make available the expected number on one occasion. That was myself when my car decided it was going to have a day off, and not start. I am grateful once again for the co-operation. On the other hand there are often more people turning up than expected, which is O.K. at the moment while there is plenty of work, but it may happen that there will be not enough work for more people than were expected on a particular day. Also of course if it is known that extra men are coming beforehand, a job may be planned to take advantage of the extra men. In other words try to let us know if you are going.

Now once everything begins to look more like a railway we hope we will be more like railway workers and less like navvies, so here is a list of the sort of thing you might fancy doing. Perhaps if you could think about what is involved and select whatever comes nearest to your dreams, and next nearest, at sometime in the future we will sort ourselves out into:-

Loco Dept.

Shed Men	Make the tea, sweep the floor	make the tea
Cleaners	Cleaning engines (you don't say)	
Fitters	Loco Maintenance and Overhaul	
Firemen	Preparation of loco, firing, assisting Driver	
Drivers	Preparation, Driving, Responsible for safety of Train.	

Signal Dept.

Signal Men Responsible for safe working of trains
Maintenance..... Off track side machines and equipment etc.

Station Staff

Station Master Responsible for smooth operation of
Station duties
Porter Collecting tips
Booking Clerk Selling tickets

Operating Dept.

Guards Responsible for preparation and safety
of train
Shunters Shunting

PW

Maintenance..... We all know what thats about

C&W

Fitters Maintenance and renovation of rolling stock

JOURNEY TO THE CENTRE OF THE EARTH - Contributed by Ted Gregory

On Thursday, 1st May, members of the society gathered outside the Mount Pleasant Sorting Office in London. Just after 6 p.m. we were taken down to a waiting room where we discarded coats etc. before descending by lift to the Station, 70 feet below the street. Here we were introduced to the fantastic railway owned by the G.P.O. which carries 50,000 bags of mail per day.

As our guide enlightened us on the intricacies of the operation of the line, the trains rattled and clattered by at the rate of one every four minutes.

In the control room we saw how every train was monitored from the moment it entered the area until it left at the other end. We went down to the bottom segment of the circle of the tube where we saw the banks of cut outs, buss bars, fuses and all the electrical paraphernalia which keeps the trains moving. Our guide's talk was interspersed with flashes and bangs from this equipment. A cabinet almost took us into the world of science fiction. Inside, a hugh glass octopus, striped with mercury splashes, gave off an eerie blue flashing light. This was the 150 volt rectifier. Close by was the 440 volt one. Also down there were the 'bilge' pumps which kept the tunnel dry.

Up nearer the surface, we passed through the main building, past the mail bag cleaning machine, the container and trolley repair shop and into the repair depot where we saw the original train and many other interesting items of rolling stock and the braking system for taking the stock back down into the tunnel after servicing.

Here we ended a fascinating tour and went back up to the surface.

One bit of excitement rounded off our evening. The fire station opposite had a 'call out'. We didn't know at the time that St. Pancras was on fire.

THE HISTORY FUNCTIONS AND POWERS OF RAILWAY POLICE

The following is an extract from a lecture given by G. Stephens, Chief of Police, Great Western Railway to the Railway Students Association of the London School of Economics on 16 January 1939.

"Railway Police formed the most important class of the Company's original staff. Even in those early days they were all sworn in as Constables under the Special Constables Act 1831. They were men of all work. Ultimately however they were relieved of the duties of permanent-way inspection, ticket collecting and the work now performed by signalmen and booking clerks.

In 1838 an Act was passed empowering Magistrates to appoint Constables and to debit the Company with the costs upon the oath of three credible witnesses that they had reason to fear unlawful behaviour on the part of labourers and others employed on the railway.

Later the Company obtained special Parliamentary powers and all the officers are now sworn in under the GWR Act 1877. In 1899 powers were obtained authorising Railway Police to follow and arrest after committing any offence for which he might have been arrested. There are occasions when the Railway Police refrain from exercising their authority because if they were to do so it would conflict with the Company's interest. The outside Police have no such matter for consideration. This inaction is regarded as a sign of weakness but the men are generally sensible enough to ignore the taunt that sometimes follows.

Today the establishment consists of 360 officers and men. The whole line is divided into four divisions with divisional officers at Paddington, Bristol, Cardiff and Birmingham.

On the four main railway lines there are 2500 Police employed and in order to get a better perspective of their work it is necessary to look at the background against which they are placed.

Total number of staff employed	577,811
Mileage including sidings	51,439
Number of passenger stations, goods depots & halts	10,035
Number of passengers carried (excl. seasons) (1937)	974,407,100
Number of parcels (excl. fish) (1937)	133,117,689
Merchandise in tons (1937)	132,793,698

During the year 1937 13,770 were prosecuted which included 4,086 for trespassing and 2,589 for ticket frauds".

HOW GREEN WAS MY VALLEY

A lucky party of 15 members set off on 3 May to visit the Welsh valleys of Gwent and East Glamorgan. Visas for the visit were provided by the local Welsh cultural attache.

The tour visited Uskmouth Power Station (or nearly) and Newport Docks and took in three valleys to Aberdare, Trethomas and Ebbw Vale. At all points eager natives were seen rushing to look at this passenger intruder into the quietness of their valleys.

A sad sight was seen in the rusting remains of pannier and saddle tank in a colliery sidings. Perhaps they are not too far gone and they might be rescued.

For the visit to Newport Docks the party had to change to a dmu at Newport because of the curves. Even the dmu barely made its way around them. This visit to Newport Station was one of several because it was the focal point of the trip. Several members were heard to remark how much they enjoyed this and intend visiting the station again in the near future.

In appreciation of the Welsh representatives tireless efforts to cement the Anglo/Welsh entente cordiale Ted Gregory presented him with a replica of a GLC blue famous person's plate to affix on his birthplace. Alas it is no more.

A mild moment of drama concluded the trip when the driver forgot that he had to stop at Bristol Parkway and a number of luckless enthusiasts has an extra visit to Swindon.

THE WYCOMBE RAILWAY & MARLOW DONKEY - Contributed by Mike Walker

Part 7 - Nationalisation and Decline

The sub-title does not imply and criticism of British Railways, but it is a fact that the railways under review had their heyday before the war and with the exception of a brief Indian Summer on the Joint Line, the increase of private transport and increased road haulage had a disastrous effect on the railway system.

On Nationalisation in January 1948, the interests of the GWR and LNER passed directly to the Western Region and Eastern Region respectively. After a while the chocolate and cream or varnished teak of the coaching stock was replaced by crimson or crimson and cream, whilst the locomotives were black or green, but not before a handful of 'Kings' and A3's had appeared in various shades of blue and the odd 'Castle' could be seen in a shade of apple green not unlike that of the LNER! In April 1950 the Eastern Region gave up responsibility for Marylebone to the Western Region which also assumed control of the GC line out to Harrow-on-the-Hill and the connection from Neasden to Northolt. This continued until 1958 when the ER's interests in GC were transferred to the LMR together with Marylebone to Northolt and Harrow-on-the-Hill. Finally, in 1974 the Joint Line passed entirely to the LMR and yet even today the WR Divisional Headquarters at Reading finds itself on the receiving end of complaints from passengers along the Joint Line.

Rationalisation began at Bourne End in the last months of 1955 when, on 11th December, the bay platform run round was lifted, followed a week later by the connection between the up main platform and the Marlow Branch. This was to enable Bourne End South Signal Box to close on 30th January 1956. A ground frame replaced it the following day to control access to the yard, control of the junction was transferred to the North Box which had been extended accordingly.

The first closure was that of the Princes Risborough to Watlington branch which closed to all traffic on 29th June 1957 although the line was retained between Princes Risborough and Chinnor for traffic to and from the cement works.

West Wycombe station was closed to passengers from 3rd November 1958 but remained open for goods traffic until March 1963. Despite being on the main line West Wycombe was some distance from that village which in those days had an excellent bus service to High Wycombe and so its closure was not too unexpected.

By the middle of 1962 the East Midlands Area TUCC had recommended closure of the stations north of Princes Risborough and the branch from there to Thame and Oxford. Despite a number of protests, the branch together with Haddenham and Ilmer Halt on the joint line closed to passengers on 7th January 1963. Through freight services on the Thame branch remained until 1965, after which the only traffic was oil between Princes Risborough and Thame and between Kennington Junction and the car works at Morris Cowley. The section between Thame and Horsepath lay disused until lifted in the summer of 1969. The bridge on this line over the A40 had only been widened to accommodate a dual carriageway in 1961, and so the newer span was re-erected in South Wales in 1970, the older going for scrap.

1963 also saw the publication of the Beeching Report. Somewhat surprisingly it did not recommend closure of the Wycombe Railway or the Marlow branch, however, the Great Central was not looked on favourably. There were many who questioned the construction of the line at the turn of the century and following nationalisation it became an unnecessary duplication. During the sixties it was run down and finally closed north of Quainton Road and Ashendon Junction on 3rd September 1966.

Meanwhile the GW route to Birmingham underwent an Indian Summer in the sixties as much traffic was diverted off the North Western main line from Euston which was being reconstructed and electrified. During the period High Wycombe played host to several named expresses - The Inter-City, the Master Cutler, The Cambrian Coast Express and from 1960, the Birmingham Pullman operated by 8 car Blue Pullman diesel units. Diesels appeared on the expresses in 1962 when most local services were also dieselised. Electrification out of Euston was complete in April 1966 and from 5th March 1967 the GW/GC ceased to be a through route. Trains to points beyond Birmingham, together with the 'Birmingham Pullman' and 'Cambrian Coast Express', were withdrawn.

After the reduction in status of the GW/GC the WR decided to single the line between Princes Risborough and Aynho. A passing loop was left at Bicester but all intermediate signal boxes and Princes Risborough South were closed and a 'mini-panel' installed at Princes Risborough North to control the single line. This work was carried out in the Autumn of 1968.

Marlow station changed as the years passed, the signal box was closed on 26th September 1954, the branch henceforth being worked as a long siding under One Engine in Steam regulations. The yard was operated by a ground frame unlocked by a key on the train staff. The engine shed closed in July 1962 when the steam worked Marlow Donkey was replaced by a diesel railcar.

Most regrettable was the demolition of Marlow station following the closure on 10th July 1967 and the construction of a new station on the site of the former coal yard, which had closed on 18th July 1966. The new station consisted of a 200 ft. long platform and a small building containing a waiting room and ticket office. This latter was short lived for it was replaced by the present bus shelter in 1972. The old station was demolished to make way for an enlarged timber yard which was served by block trains which operated on Tuesdays and Fridays from Bow Creek (ER). This scheme did not prove as successful as was hoped and the train ceased to run in late 1969, after which the yard closed. The site is now an industrial estate and, except for the old cattle dock, all trace of the old station has gone.

Maidenhead, being on the GW main line, did not suffer the running down of the joint line. Its three signal boxes closed in July 1962 when semaphore signals were replaced by Multiple-aspect-signals worked from Slough panel, at the same time Maidenhead East Junction, the crossing from relief to main lines, was moved from the east end of the platforms to a new position near the Thames bridge. A new signal box was provided at the west end of platforms 4 and 5 to operate the branch which continued to be semaphore controlled.

However, it was not always positive developments at Maidenhead for the goods station closed in 1965. The buildings were not demolished and in 1968 it was converted to a car terminal for Silcock & Collings who dealt with Ford vehicles, new cars being brought in for local distribution, and trucks and vans from Langley being taken out. The depot opened in 1969, the delay being due to the need to rebuild the branch line bridge over the approach road which was too low for loaded transporter lorries.

Many stations lost their freight services in the sixties, Saunderton on 1st March 1965, Princes Risborough in 1966 and from the Maidenhead to High Wycombe line on 11th September 1967 (as noted Marlow lost its freight services in 1966). Even High Wycombe south yard vanished, replaced by a car park.

Passenger closures continued, South Aylesbury Halt succumbed on 5th June 1967 whilst after a period of deliberate running down, missed connections and other policies designed to drive passengers away, permission was sought to close the Bourne End-High Wycombe section. The first closure attempt was fruitless, as Thames Valley were unable to convince the Traffic Commissioners they could provide adequate bus services. However, the service closed with little protest or publicity on 4th May 1980. The passing was so quiet many regular passengers turned up at Bourne End on the Monday, aghast to find a set of stop blocks across the line between the level crossings.

M.D.R.S. VISIT TO ROCKET 150 - Contributed by Mike Rose

Saturday 24th May 1980

The day dawned rather grey and we hoped it would not continue like this. Eleven people met at Stans' house and we set off. After doing this we realised we were one short, we had forgotten Mike Walker. After collecting the missing member the excursion started in earnest, and the weather improved.

We had a comparatively uneventful drive to Liverpool where our first stop was Edge Hill Station. This was the start of a 'Rail Train', i.e. following the original excavations for the Wapping cutting and exploring the site of the winding house, Moorish arch, stables and tunnels of the original Liverpool and Manchester Railway. When first built the trains from Wapping docks needed rope haulage up the initial 1 in 48 incline through the tunnel to the level section at Edge Hill.

The cutting was very impressive, 40 feet deep and all hand-finished with the pickmarks still showing in the sandstone. We were able to walk down one tunnel, unfortunately illuminated only by one person with a torch, about 200 yards into the tunnel. He told us to keep to the path at the side, which we did. On returning up the tunnel one member of the party commented it was easier to walk in the middle - which he did. This was shortly following by splashing noises and yells as he walked into some large puddles!

When we exited from the tunnel into the cutting the party discovered how Scouse children entertain themselves. They shower stones and half bricks onto people following the Rail Train! However, we managed to leave without injury and re-embarked on the minibus.

It was then decided to find the other end of the tunnel, where it surfaced. This was in a park area which in the past must have been covered in railways. Interestingly in this area were two mounds of stone blocks which, on closer examination, proved to be stone sleepers from the original Liverpool and Manchester railway. Our journey then continued to Southport.

On arrival at the Metropole Hotel, there was some initial confusion over bookings, however, our smooth talking committee members resolved this problem and we all finished with accommodation for the weekend.

Sunday 25th May

Another grey and miserable start to the day, some fellow guests seemed to delight in telling us that all sorts of dire disaster had befallen Rocket, Sans Pareil and Novelty on Saturday. The newspapers appeared to confirm their stories and so we set off for Rainhill wondering what kind of display we would witness, if any!

On arrival we found our places in the stands. Our seats were probably in the best location possible, other than the footplate of one of the locomotives. The weather had improved and the sun was shining.

Attached to the Rainhill site was an "attraction" area where there were many stands belonging to various organisations and societies. Some of our Brunswick Green and Copper capped members allowed their loyalites to guide them into a large tent with the proclamation on the front "Gods Wonderful Railway". Unfortunately for them it was the local Bible thumping crusade - they came away enlightened.

As the time of the display approached, the sun was shining and excitement grew, until at last smoke appeared in the distance with the approach of the Midland 'Spinner' No. 673. What a beautiful sight she was. The other locomotives then followed at 300 yard intervals, all looking absolutely superb with gleaming paintwork and polished fittings. Each exhibit was greeted by applause and cheers.

The loudest cheering and applause was given, deservedly, for Lion, 142 years old and still going strong. So strong she was actually being used to push a recalcitrant replica 'Sans Pareil' - less than 1 year old.

After watching the return of the cavalcade, Sans Pareil this time under her own steam, we joined the thousands trying to return to their cars, coaches etc. Then we returned to Southport, with a lively discussion taking place on which engine or engines looked best. Agreement was reached that they were all first class and the day had been a complete success.

The thought was expressed would these locomotives be around for the 200th Anniversary?

Monday 26th May

The last day. Rain was coming down fairly heavily, thank goodness we went to Rainhill yesterday.

After breakfast a visit to Steamport was on the agenda. While we waited for this to open Stan cast his professional eye over the local property and gave us his opinion of same - mostly complimentary. The rain stopped.

In Steamport we found a fascinating display of photographs of early railways in Southport and some of us had a brakevan ride pulled by two different industrial tank engines. We also witnessed the sad sight of a Black 5 being towed out of the shed by a diesel crane.

Other members of the party, who throughout the weekend had seemed extremely interested in buses had found to their great joy that there were several buses and trams also preserved in the shed.

After this enjoyable interlude homeward progress was continued by way of Dinting Railway Centre, Glossop. What a glorious sight greeted us there. 6115 Scots Guardsman and an austerity O-6-O tank in steam giving brakevan rides. Both engines were spotless with superb paint finish and seemingly no dirt anywhere. To my eyes they seemed to be superior even to the GWS charges at Didcot!

The same could not be said of Blue Peter and Bittern, both awaiting restoration and superficially at least, looking rather neglected.

Time waits for no man and so we re-embarked on the minibus. A decision was made to head for the M1 via the Peak District. Some of our party, to whom this was an unknown part of England were even given to exclaiming "It's even more beautiful than the Chilterns!"

All too soon it seemed we were back home having spent an enjoyable weekend in good company pursuing a common interest.

I am sure I echo everyones thoughts in thanking particularly our drivers and organisers for putting a lot of effort into providing the rest of the party with so much pleasure. Thankyou.

Let's hope all our photographs develop well to augment the memories of a very pleasant and thoroughly enjoyable Rocket 150.

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