

# *Marlow & District Railway Society*

*Please reply to:*

MARLOW DONKEY NO.32

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

SEPTEMBER 1984

The August edition of Railway Magazine was the one thousandth issue. Congratulations have poured in from preservation societies and publishers of railway literature. May we add our Society's best wishes to those already expressed. Eighty-seven years of continuous publication is no mean feat. No.500 appeared in the year Railway World was born. Both continued to appear during the war years - 1939 to 1945 - and have in the post-war era continued to improve in presentation and content.

Railway Magazine No.1, published in July, 1897, contained an article on the Great Central Railway's extension to London then under construction. It was the demise of the GCR which suggested that our Society's 1984 outing should be to Loughborough, looking en route at any vestiges remaining after the 1969 closure. A brief account of the day's happenings appears elsewhere in this Newsletter.

Inviting Mr. David Copley of the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust to give us a talk last July was rather a departure from our 'mainly steam but always railways' proviso when booking speakers. However, the meeting was well supported (although four members were in the United States) and Mr. Copley's talk and slide show was first rate. A few weeks later twenty-seven passengers embarked upon a narrow boat and passing through Burghfield and Garston locks reached Sheffield lock. We were all appreciative of the high quality of workmanship which is going into the preservation of this exciting stretch of water.

Those of us who regularly see the weedy and litter-strewn areas in the centre of Denham and Beaconsfield stations where through tracks once lay are not very happy to learn that this is to be the fate of High Wycombe Station also. Apparently the Midland Region wish to do this as a parting gesture before handing the line back to the Western Region. A saving of £3,000 annually is quoted as the reason for this latest example of 'rationalisation'.

Reading of next year's GWR 150th Anniversary celebrations brought to mind the exchange between the chairman and Mr. (now Sir) Peter Parker at a meeting of the Select Committee on Nationalised Industries in March, 1978.

QUESTION: 'Is it occasionally possible to achieve perfection?'

ANSWER: 'Only on the Great Western, Chairman.'

## 1984 MEETINGS PROGRAMME

- September 20th - Frank Saunders, "Some of the Steamier Corners of the World". Super 8 sound cine of steam in Europe, South America, India, and the Far East.
- October 18th - Brent Hudson, "Confessions of a Travel Courier." Mr. Hudson presents a lighthearted look at the Trans-Siberian Railway and China; illustrated with 35mm colour slides - not for the squeamish.
- November 15th - Les McAllister, "150 Years of Irish Railways and 20 Years of Preservation." Mr. McAllister, an Officer of the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland, examines the development of the preservation movement in Ireland; illustrated with colour slides, and plenty of Irish humour!
- December 20th - Tony Hall-Patch, "Christmas Film Show from the Archives." Mr. Hall-Patch, Assistant Keeper at the Science Museum, returns to show some more rare films from the archives following his entertaining visit in December 1982.

All meetings will be held in the Gainsborough Suite of the Chequers, Marlow commencing at 20.00 hours.

---

## PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

The Committee, after some discussion, has decided to hold a photographic competition after the AGM in January instead of showing the usual selection of members slides.

It is proposed that there be 2 entry categories - prints (black and white or colour) and 35mm slides. A £5 book token will be awarded to the winner of each category.

General rules are as follows:

1. No person to submit more than 6 entries per category.
2. All entries must have been taken by the entrant.
3. There will be no time limit (i.e. shots taken in 1920 can be submitted if taken by the entrant!).
4. All entries must have a railway theme.
5. There will be no entry fee.

Judging will be performed by all members present at the competition, including entrants, votes being cast for the best three entries in both categories.

## 1984 CHRISTMAS DINNER

Following last year's successful Christmas Dinner at the Chequers, a booking has been made at the same venue for this year's event on Saturday 22nd December at 19.20; dinner will be served at 20.00.

The anticipated cost will be £10 per person, and a £2 deposit is required by Mike Norris to reserve a place. As last year's event was fully subscribed well before December, you are advised to book early.

---

## "A RETURN TO YESTERDAY"

The above title is borrowed from the leaflet published by the Great Central Railway at Loughborough. It does indeed describe our 1984 Society's outing.

With Roger Bowen as our capable courier we followed the course of the former GCR. The Great Central Railway was built from Nottingham to Marylebone, London, between 1894 and 1899. Most parts of the line were removed in the 1960's and our circuitous journey was based on the many fragments still visible. A young Leicestershire photographer, S.W.A. Newton, has recorded with his camera the construction of this, our last main line. L.T.C. Rolt used many of these photographs in his book, "The Making of a Railway".

Members boarded the coach at several stops from Marlow to Aylesbury and our first halt was at Quainton Road station, now the headquarters of a busy railway preservation society. At Calvert there were few fragments of the station but the lines were still shiny and the GLC's garbage disposal site continues to justify the retention of this length of track.

At Brackley the viaduct has gone but the station appeared to be intact. Furthnorth the Helmdon Viaduct still stands. Woodford Halse was formerly a very active railway centre but other than railwayman's cottages nothing survives. We passed Sulgrave with its memories of George Washington's family and arrived at a very pleasant hostelry at Byfield where lunch awaited us.

Nothing at Charwelton was visible except a weed-covered track-bed. But we could see the entrance to Catesby Tunnel. We paused awhile at Rugby Central but there was little to see. The buildings at Leicester are still standing and looked quite impressive. The next station, at Belgrave and Birstall, has been vandalised almost completely, although eventually the preservationists may require this "station". At Quorn and Woodhouse we watched the train from Loughborough arrive. It was diesel-hauled. Once again steam was banned because of the drought. Burnt verges bore witness to more serious possibilities - although one wonders how the railways coped in steam days.

At Loughborough Central the male members of the party travelled by Guard's Van (steam-hauled) to a very impressive loco shed. The only surviving GC passenger steam engine No.56, "Butler Henderson", stood idle, as also did 0-6-2T, No.4744, a GN N2 class locomotive built by Gresley to work the heavy suburban trains in the King's Cross area. No.71000, "Duke of Gloucester", the three cylinder pacific and only member of its class, looked promising and very near completion. I last saw her in a cannibalised state in Woodham's yard at Barry. Two ex-GWR locomotives were in the shed, 6990 "Witherslack Hall", and a Collett 2-8-0T No.5224, both being rebuilt. Far from home was former SR "West Country" class No.34039, "Boscastle". She has been at Loughborough for eleven years and appeared to be well on in reconstruction. Various diesels were there including a Class 40. Among the carriages were two ex-GCR "Barnum" open third coaches.

Members enjoyed the return rail trip to Rothley. The reservoir at Swithland looked cool and inviting on this the hottest day of the year.

The homeward trip was uneventful. My favourite hostelry on the A5 didn't cater for coach parties but we found an ABC pub in Buckingham which was happy to serve our needs. Our thanks to an excellent courier, to Mike Walker for his organisation, and to Gavin who was once again our able coach driver. A good time was had by all.

---

#### A TRIP ON THE WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY

by E.W. Lewcock

The day started rather dull... we were on holiday. With tact, and a careful approach to one's better half, along with the lure of a drive across Exmoor from near Barnstaple, Minehead could be reached comfortably before midday. By coincidence, the steam service left Minehead at 12.15 p.m.

We made it comfortably, to find 2994 'Vulcan' - the ex-British Leyland 'Austerity' 0-6-0 - very much on steam in the shed, and a four-coach set in the main platform which, in its heyday, was capable of taking a 16-coach train bound for Paddington.

A quick tour of the station revealed a railcar set, a preserved Great Western horsedrawn lorry of 1910 vintage, and a curious bogie electric unit believed to be from the Post Office railway in London, with raised centre third rail.

'Victor', the other 'Austerity', was dead on shed; whilst the signal box at the platform end - although appearing original - is in fact the Dunster box, moved here in 1977.

A few minutes before starting time, 'Vulcan' took on a final top-up of water, before coupling onto the train - a ceremony which always gathers a collection of bystanders.

The run to Dunster is level... and, accompanied by much smoke, with draincocks opened frequently, we ran there in comfortable time. Following this, 'Vulcan' settled into her stride, having warmed through; and the reason for the heavy fire became obvious, after leaving the holiday area around Blue Anchor... for,

after running along the coastline, the line doubles inland to Washford, on a steady climb steepening to 1-in-67. With a sturdy 'Austerity' in charge, there was no trouble on this bank; and we slipped past the Somerset & Dorset museum layout, before much of its content could be taken in by a quick glance from the carriage window.

After Washford, the track bed of the old West Somerset mineral railway could be seen, coming in from Comberow, on the righthand side. This bed here runs parallel to our own track, as far as Watchet, where it crosses underneath the existing main line. The line has been well described by R.J. Sellick, in 'The Old Mineral Line'. The fact that Watchet east pier in the harbour was once broad gauge, whilst the west pier was narrow gauge, comes from reading that book - rather than from personal observation!

Steady coastal trade still passes through the harbour - but unfortunately, not by rail. Ships from various countries call in regularly, and wood seemed to be the main traffic of the day, when I passed through.

From Watchet to Willington is a short run, the line going inland - finally, this time - through pleasant countryside, until we were halted by the home signal's being 'ON' ... thus reminding us that this is the end of the steam run. On arrival in the platform, a two-car D.M.U. awaited the intrepid onward voyagers - of whom, apart from ourselves, there were rather few on that day. Willington also houses the preserved diesels; and Hymek D7017 looked extremely smart. They certainly had a bit more character than the majority of that ilk, and quite a lot of people have a soft spot for them.

The run to Bishops Lidyard passes through perfect Somerset countryside, of great charm and character ... very dimly remembered by the writer, from just before the War, when on the occasion the run was on a through train bound for London, in a converted clerestory coach (the conversion being from gas to electric light). The doors into the corridor swung open, instead of sliding - with unfortunate consequences at times!

Of course, the great advantage of the DMU is the ease of seeing ahead from the front coach; and whilst signals were absent, there were numerous white boards with black crosses, to indicate crossings ahead, and demanding the usual audible warning. The track itself was very well maintained, with few weeds; and Bishops Lidyard produced a veritable museum of vehicles, in varying states of disrepair... from very well maintained and repainted restaurant cars, to a 2-8-0 '2800' class loco, straight from Barry.

The return working home, with reversal of the change to steam, halfway along, produced no further surprises; although the fore-and-aft motion from 'Vulcan', when running at speed, was equally noticeable when running in reverse, as it was when running forward. However, I well remember runs behind GWR 'Counties' and other large engines, which gave the same result.

While in the area, opportunity was taken to look at one or two of the remaining relics of the old Linton & Barnstaple railway; and it is rather suprising to find that, after 50 years of closure (1935), the old viaduct at Chalfen (near Barnstaple) still appears to be in a condition that a train could run over it tomorrow, if the tracks were relaid. Just beneath the viaduct, one of the houses has steps up to it, which appear to be ex-Linton & Barnstaple sleepers; while at Blackmoor Gate, the pub itself - which was the station now houses quite a number of relics of the old line

A visit by a railway buff to this part of Devon is, therefore still well worthwhile.

BOOK REVIEW

by Ron Brooks

This time we have books describing the major parts at the railway and, indeed, the whole of it!

'RAILWAYS' - 'CIVIL ENGINEERING' by B. Morgan

Arrow 95p  
ISBN 0 09 908180 6

This is a history of railways in Britain with an eye to, and details of, the Civil Engineering aspect of their construction. There are details of rail, track, bridges, tunnels, architecture and 44 photographic illustrations as well as diagrams and useful maps of the network at various dates. A must for the serious student

'RAILWAYS' - 'MECHANICAL ENGINEERING' by J.B. Snell

Arrow 95p  
ISBN 0 09 908170 9

This companion volume to that reviewed above is history again but this time revolving round the prime movers and rolling stock together with a discourse on the 'Railway Dye'. By the way did it ever occur to you that the car heater (1950 or 70) was a substantial spanner in the railway works? Lots of fascinating information and illustrations.

'COMPLETE BRITISH RAILWAYS MAPS & GAZETTEER' by G.J. Wignall - Oxford Publ. £5.95  
SBN 86093 272 9

Now that I have bought this superb volume I find I can't read ANY railway book without constant reference to it - and it improves them all I can't think why the list of stations omits the year of opening; it lists only the year of closure and with eleven years of research you would think the information was available - but not included. In spite of this well worth the money.

'RAILWAY ARCHITECTURE'

ORBIS £12  
ISBN 0 85613 269 1

Nicely printed on quality paper and although black and white photos it doesn't detract from the very wide and informative coverage. Not a basic necessity for the railway library but a joy to read and a super 'companion' for the interested traveller. My spies (the educated ones) tell me that this book is used as a university text book.

'THE RAILROAD STATION' by C.L.V. Meeks

Castle Books \$25  
ISBN 0-300-00764-7

The title gives this book's origin away but at the same time it is a salutary reminder that other nations had railways even if the British Navy built many of them. National styles amend common needs but it isn't until you read a book like this that style of need is appreciated. Just the thing for a bedside book, stacks of information and pictures.

## SOD'S LAWS RELATING TO RAILWAY PHOTOGRAPHY

It seems that railway photography, like every other pursuit of life is governed by Sod's Laws. We offer the following for starters:

1. One reaches the perfect location only to find the day's only train passed five minutes earlier.
2. The sun going behind a dark cloud after a long wait is a sure sign that the action is about to begin.
3. One reaches the perfect location, the light's fine and there is plenty of time to set up. When the train appears, one finds the camera is uncocked.
4. In frustration one takes the "background scenery without a train" shot with the last frame of film. Que for instant appearance of.....
5. Everything is perfect, location, light, set-up. The train appears simultaneously with a uniformed person who suggests one might like to move on. Well, it is a slight liberty to stand on a motorway!

All these happened this summer. Perhaps members may care to contribute their own experiences.

---

## THE ROAD TO THE ISLES (and CHARING CROSS!)

by Mike Walker

A spring expedition to the north of Scotland has become an established feature of the Chiltern Trains annual programme. In 1981 and '82 the destination was Inverness and the Kyle of Lochalsh whilst Oban was visited in 1983. This Eastern, John Diffey and his team had their sights set on Fort William and Mallaig.

At the unearthly hour of 0503 on Good Friday we assembled at High Wycombe to await the train which arrived on time, for one, behind a 47 (don't ask which, it was too early for train spotting!). A feature of Chiltern Trains trips is unusual routing and we joined the WCML at Bletchley by way of Princes Risborough, Aylesbury and Quainton Road.

Once under the wire, 85,010 gave us a spirited run to Mossend Yard near Motherwell, where 37,081 "Loch Long" and 37.191 awaited us, the former smoking ominously. We made our way around east and north Glasgow via the accepted route, that is Coatbridge, Stepps, Springburn, Wisterton and Kilpatrick.

We left the filth and decay of Glasgow at Craighendran and joined the West Highland line, once part of the NBR and now subject of an extensive marketing project by the ScR. Leaving the Clyde we ran alongside Gare Loch overlooking the nuclear sub base at Faslane, heavily guarded by police, dogs and TV. Crossing a short, but steeply graded, saddle of

land after Garelochhead we emerged high above a long finger of water from the Clyde Estuary named after 37.081, Loch Long. On each side the mountains rise to around 2500', but to the east they are punctuated by Glen Douglas, another well known name, which leads down to Loch Lomond. From the train the Glen is marked by an MoD base and sidings.

By now we were running somewhat late and so at Arrochar & Tarbet, on another saddle separating Lochs Long and Lomond, we awaited 37.051 with a train from Oban instead of passing at Ardlui as planned. Moving north again, Loch Lomond was visible far below through the trees to the right. Dropping down towards water level, the trees cleared to give a glimpse of Rob Roy's cave on the far bank before we slowed to change tokens at Ardlui, which like all the stations on the line retains its NB buildings in a vivid two tone green scheme. No bus shelters here!

At the head of Loch Lomond we pass the Falls of Ben Glas and enter a broad, somewhat barren valley, Glen Falloch, which took us to Crianlarich where the line divided. To the left a connection put in during the war gives access to the Caledonian's line from Dunblane and Perth to Oban, now closed east of Crianlarish. Awaiting us here were John Diffey and Rod Squires who had arrived on Wednesday to check hotels. They too noted the black exhaust with concern, raising memories of the first Kyle trip when a 26 caught fire. Leaving the junction we crossed a viaduct with the remains of the CR line leading to a mill below and started the long climb towards Rannoch Moor.

As far as Tyndrum Upper, the Oban line is visible on the opposite side of the valley until, after Tyndrum Lower, it turns westwards into Glen Lochy.. Meanwhile we climbed onward over the twin viaducts on the horseshoe curve below Bienn a' Chaisteil and into Bridge of Orchy. Beyond comes Loch Tulla and Crannoch Wood, the last remnant of the once vast Great Caledonian Forest, burnt down centuries ago to rid the highlands of wolves! Trees are now rare up here.

We were now high on Rannoch Moor, Here the line is on a mattress of tree roots, brushwood and thousands of tons of earth to prevent the track dropping into bogs. Over twenty miles across in any direction it features two of Britain's loneliest stations, Rannoch and Conour, both no more than passing loops, and our only snow sheds. Snow still lay on the ground but on this occasion a strong wind and driving rain made the view bleaker than ever and just for good measure "Loch Long" was now burning nicely with around four feet of flame coming out of the exhaust - not that anyone in charge seemed too worried!

Once over the Conour Summit, at 1350 feet, the highest point on the line, the Moor is left behind and the line descends past Loch Trieg. After the station at Tulloch, it serves a village, the line turns west and enters Glen Spean. This is a reasonably broad valley but soon both River Spean and railway plunge into Monessie Gorge, a spectacular rocky cleft more typical of western Canada.

After the last two stations, Roy Bridge and Spean Bridge, the line turns southwest and enters the southern end of the Great Rift Valley, a massive geological fault running from Loch Linnie up to the Moray Firth at Inverness and dominated by Loch Ness. To the south of the train is Ben Nevis, at 4,406ft. our highest peak.



Passing Inverloch Castle and the British Aluminium Company's smelter we reached Mallaig Junction,  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile from Fort William station, a few minutes early. A surprising feature of the line is the heavy traffic. After Crianlarish we had passed a further passenger train and two freights, one a Speedlink general freight the other a rake of Whisky grain hoppers. We had plenty of time to view an encouraging collection of new Speedlink vehicles at Mallaig Junction as we waited for a service train from the Far West which arrived behind the usual 37 and trailing a surprise, an air conditioned Mk.IIf BSO.

A complicated shunt now took place, 37.081 and 37.081 and 37.191 left us and headed off down the branch to the shed. Meanwhile down at the station the pilot moved a pair of Mk.III sleepers onto the rear of the Mallaig train after which 37.D11 and 97.251 "Ethel 2" (Electric train Heating Ex-Locomotive - a deactuated 25) coupled on to form the West Highland portion of the "Royal Highlander" bound for Euston. The station now clear to receive us the pilot came out to collect us. Hence our 11 coach train finished its journey behind a very game 20.097 sporting the old royal train headcode. As we filed along the platform to catch the buses to the hotels one last surprise awaited us - a lone piper in full cry in the foyer!

Next morning, despite the assurance of a local guard the previous evening. It was still pouring down as we boarded a Highland Ford coach for a tour to Oban and Glen Coe. Here I will pass on a tip from our cheery driver. Steamed up windows should be wiped with a cloth soaked with washing-up liquid to prevent further steaming-it works!

John Diffey had obviously had words in high places because as we headed south the sun came out and the rest of the week-end was glorious<sup>3</sup> Heading for Oban we paralleled the course of the former Caledonian Ballaculish branch still remarkably intact despite closing in 1966. Of course its most famous feature the combined road rail bridge across the mouth of Loch Etive at Connel Ferry remains. Traffic lights still control the single file traffic but the rails have long gone.

After lunch in Oban we returned to Connel Ferry and then followed the Oban railway through Taynuilt and over the Pass of Brander with its special rock slide signals to Loch Awe where we paused to view the Crauchan pump storage hydro electric station. Continuing to Tyndrum where we turned north and returned to Fort William via the haunting beauty of Glen Coe where our driver gave us a detailed account of the massacre of the MacDonald clan.

The MacDonald's survived however and two of them joined their colleagues from B.R. Fort William on Saturday and Sunday evening to put on an enjoyable ceilidh for their sassenach visitors. Area Traffic Manager, Alec MacDonald, in full highland dress provided accompaniment on the pipes for booking clerk Linda Brown's highland dancing. The opportunity was taken to sell B.R.'s tasteful souvenirs - ties, teeshirst and pens all bearing the West Highland Terrier motif, also found on the lines class 37's. Coaches sport the "Scotrail" name!

Sunday was reserved for a return trip to Mallaig. All eleven coaches and both 37.081 (now repaired) and 37.191 made the trip over the most spectacular 42 miles of railway in Britain, built by Sir Robert McAlpine and opened in 1901 and opened on this glorious Easter Sunday specially for us. Leaving Mallaig Junction we passed the local shed, with 20.097 and a pair of 37's, and the Ralts of Banavie and Corpach separated by a swing bridge over the Caledonian Canal at the foot of a flight of locks known as Neptune's Staircase. An 08 sat in the paper mill sidings at Corpach. The train was now running alongside Loch Ell, which despite being a sea loch was mirror still. Beyond the Loch the line climbs and beyond a short tunnel, the full majesty of the 100ft. high concrete Glenfinnan viaduct was to be seen curving round to the left. Our crossing was dead slow affording good views of Loch Shiel and the Jacobite Monument far below and a terrified sheep running between the parapet and the train!

Considering the line was open specially for us the presence of another train awaiting us at Glenfinnan station was another surprise. It was 37.175 with a p.w. train. The scenery now becomes starkly beautiful, brown bracken and rough grass covers the mountains punctuated by bare rock outcrops. The waters of Loch Eilt were still and deep blue. From here on the line pierces several tunnels and moves close to the Atlantic coast passing three sea lochs, Ailort, Nan Uamh and Nan Ceal. At Arissaig we reach the western most point on BR, further west than Penzance! From here the last few miles to Mallaig head slightly north-north-east.

Mallaig, once Europe's largest Herring port, has a very short loop and platform so some more complicated monouvres were called for to run round, the operation taking over an hour. Our return to Fort William was punctuated by a photo run past at Lochelside.

Monday was the return south, uneventful to Glasgow, passengers soaking up the scenery clearly visible now. As I said at the beginning Chiltern Trains try to follow unusual routes some times planned others unplanned, the best to come. A spanner in the works at Westerton meant the Springburn line was unavailable, thus we became the first loco hauled passenger train for seven years through Partrick and the tunnels which took us through Charing Cross, Queen Street (low level) and High Street stations under the city centre - the people on platforms were amazed. Onto the Airdrie line we passed a 314 emu in striking orange/black Strathclyde PTE livery.

At Garrowhill we made a long stop whilst the crew consulted their Ian Allen Atlas - where next? Actually a points failure at Sunnyside Junction and parked wagons on the connection to Mossend Yard had to be cleared. During the stop a Jock tried to board....

"Where are you going?"

"Airdrie"

"This train' going to London"

"Hey Jimmy! London trains nay go from here"

"Try it and see!"

Deciding it looked different from an emu he back off.

85.011 came on at Mossend, which we left an hour late, but some very fast running and plenty of schedule padding south of Bletchley meant that 45.142 brought us into High Wycombe 30 minutes EARLY!

Once again thanks are due to John Diffey, his colleagues and in particular the staff of the West Highland line - where a real railway, semaphore signals, real stations, loco-hauled trains (no dmu's) and pick up freights all live on with a beautiful background. Discover it for yourself sometime - there's even steam to Mallaig this summer, NUM permitting.

---

TRANSPORT TRUST A.G.M.

by Alan Wheeler

Held at Hon. W.H. McAlpine's private museum at Fawley on Sat. 12 May 1984.

I was asked by the Committee to represent the Marlow & District Railway Society at the AGM of the Transport Trust, and wearing the hat of your delegate I report as follows:-

The President of the Trust, Sir Peter Allen, asked Mr. Bill (McAlpine) to give a brief history of the museum, pending the arrival of the Chairman, who was riding on the footplate of the steam loco at the time. This brief talk will be the subject of another article in due course.

The President then informed us that the attendance at this AGM, over 70, was the largest since the 1969 AGM. He went on to talk about the major project of the TT (Transport Trust) at present. The restoration of the DH88 Comet "Grosvenor House" aircraft, the winner of the 1934 England/Australia air race. David Weston, the artist, had painted the "Comet" and a limited edition print of 1000 has been produced. The original painting had been sold to Charles Forte for display in the Grosvenor House Hotel. Prints are available to members of the Trust at £10 each, the general public price is £15.

The Chairman, David Morgan, then read the notice covering the AGM George Reid, the Director General, said apologies of absence had been received from among others Vice-Presidents Lords Montagu and Garnett and Mr. Robert Reid, Chairman of BR.

The minutes of the 1983 AGM were agreed and passed, followed by the accounts. The re-election of the retiring members of the Council on-bloc was swiftly carried out as was the election of Auditors, with a slight hesitation on the part of the President as to Auditor's fees.

Chairman's Report: The Chairman stated that the financial position of the Trust was healthier than a year ago, when there was a £1,229 deficit on the year's trading. The Donington Transport Pageant held on 24/25 Sept '83 had been, for the TT, a great success and the Patron, Prince Michael of Kent had supported it by attending. A vote of thanks was given to all volunteers in the past year, this was received with applause. The Charitable Donations received by the Trust has for some time been falling, and the Council and members were urged to find new sources of finance. The NCB scheme in conjunction with the TT and ARPS in which coal at special prices was obtained had raised

£14,000 for the railways and more than £30,000 from other coal users. The TT benefited by about £3,000 from the scheme.

The "Steam Heritage Yearbook" at £1 was now on sale\* and all members had received a complimentary copy (where's ours?). The quarterly magazine "Digest" had had production problems due to the Editor having personal problems. The print "Duchess of Hamilton" had not sold as well as expected and was now on offer to members at £3.00, and the general public at £3.80. The TT would have a major stand at this year's Farnborough Air Show in September. An appeal for volunteers to man the Marylebone HQ was made. The TT Library at the University of Surrey in Guildford with 3 volunteers could not be expanded due to lack of funds. The Library is open to members and students.

AOB: Several questions were asked about the "potted" history of the Trust in Steam Heritage Yearbook; these were answered by the Chairman.

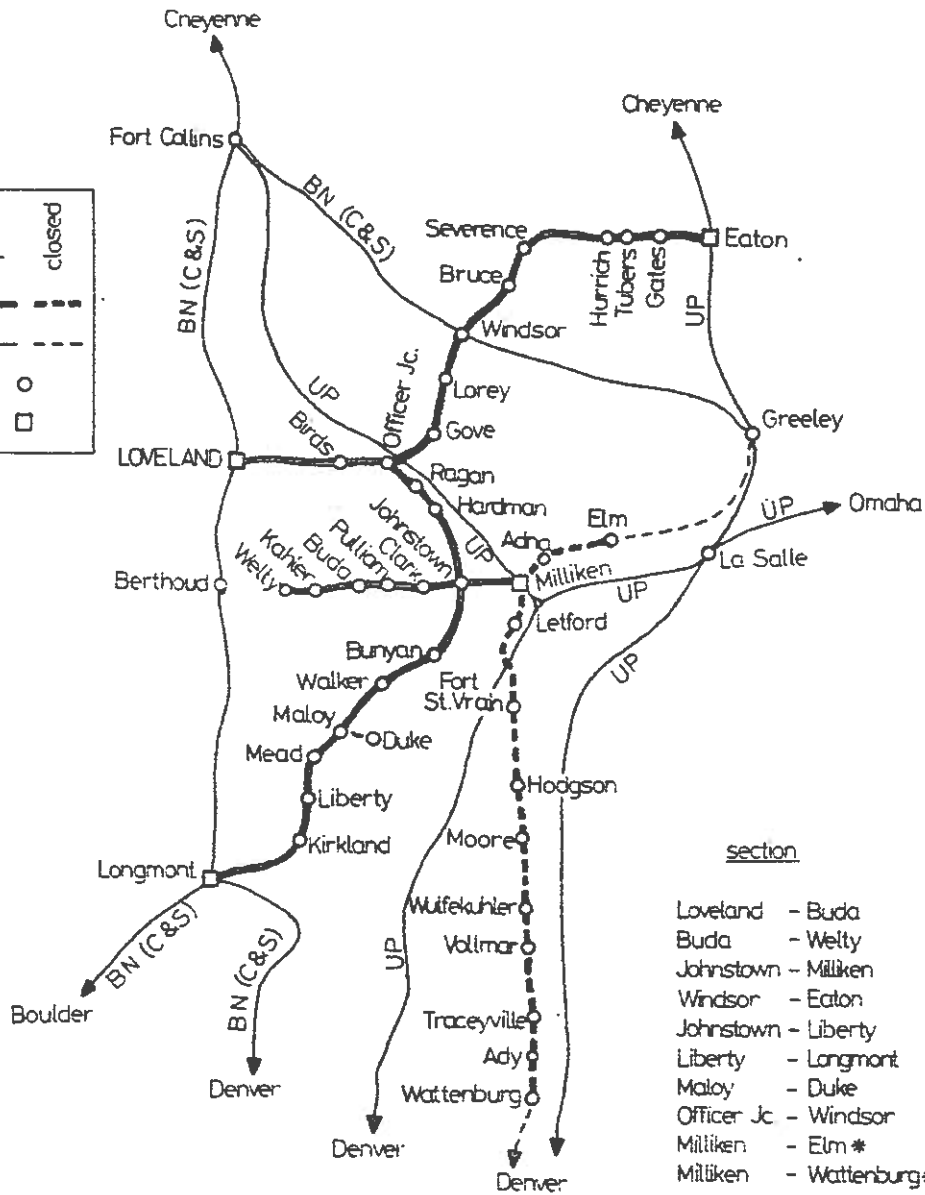
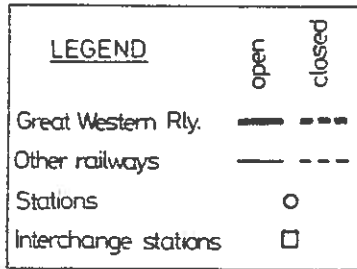
Mr. David Ogilvy then gave a very interesting short talk on the DH88 Comet progress. Briefly, 41 major UK firms had given their skill and time free of charge in restoring this vintage aircraft. The TT had given the first donation towards its rebuilding. However despite the free aid and donations, funds had run out when the aircraft had had £100,000 spent on it. The RAF Farnborough Air College had come to the aid-by making it an Apprentices' Exercise. Work was now proceeding and by the September Air Show it should be in 1 piece, but not flying. There had been a dispute as to ownership, but Mr. Ogilvy had been able to prove that it belonged to the Shuttleworth Collection. A book is due to be published in September covering the history of the Comet to mark the 50th Anniversary of its race win to Australia. Sir Peter Allen then added a few further details, Prince Michael of Kent was travelling to Farnborough in mid June to see the work in progress and there is a possibility of the DH88 being airworthy by the Farnborough Air Show when it will have its maiden flight.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Bill and the Fawley Museum Society as hosts, and I, wearing my FMS hat, outlined the programme for the rest of the day, when locomotives were operational and the museum open to inspection. The meeting closed at 12.35 and the bar opened shortly afterwards.

#### Notes:

\* Steam Heritage Yearbook at £1, published by TEE Publishing. This excellent publication covers every, I do mean every museum open to the public that has anything to do with transport or uses coal. Over 750 places listed. However the diary section is a main source of reference. It was stated by a member that a couple of weeks ago he had met Ian Allan, who had a copy on the back seat of his car. When asked about it Mr. Allan said the diary section was his absolute reference from which he worked and was always with him. Highly recommended and something we can get via the Transport Trust as members.

# GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY



section	opened	closed	miles
Loveland - Buda	1902-		15.7
Buda - Welty	1903-		2.0
Johnstown - Milliken	1904-		2.6
Windsor - Eaton	1905-		12.6
Johnstown - Liberty	1905-		11.7
Liberty - Longmont	1906-		6.1
Maloy - Duke	1907-		0.5
Officer Jc - Windsor	1907-		7.0
Milliken - Elm*	1917-1971	} 28.2	
Milliken - Wattenburg*	1917-1947		

\* ex- Denver, Laramie & Northwestern R.R. built 1910-1911.

### STEAM LOCOMOTIVES

1	Baldwin	2-8-0	built 1904	T. E.	28,000 lbs	B.P. 180 p.s.i.	retired 1952	scrapped
2	"	"	" 1905	"	"	"	" ?	"
51	"	"	" 1906	"	30,000 lbs	" 190	"	1963 to J Birmingham returned to GW 1983
52	"	"	"	"	"	"	" 1952	scrapped
60	ALCo	"	" 1937	"	"	"	" 1963	to Black River & Western RR, NJ, in service.
75	Baldwin	"	" 1907	"	30,000 lbs	" 190	" 1965	preserved
90	"	2-10-0	" 1924	"	46,500 lbs	" 200	" 1967	to Strasburg Railroad, PA, in service.
100	"	0-6-0	" 1906	"	25,600 lbs	" ?	" ?	scrapped
101	"	"	" 1907	"	"	" ?	" ?	"

### DIESEL-ELECTRIC LOCOMOTIVES

61	E M D	SW1	B-B	built 1952	600 h.p.	in service	bought new
62	"	"	"	" ?	"	retired 1983	secondhand
63	"	"	"	" ?	"	"	"
121	"	SW9	"	" 1951	1200	in service	bought new
122	"	"	"	"	"	retired 1983	"
1589	"	GP7	"	" 1952	1500	in service	ex-Burlington Northern 1589 (CB&Q 233) in 1983
1617	"	"	"	"	"	"	" 1617 ( " 261) " "
1621	"	"	"	"	"	"	" 1621 ( " 265) " "

### PETROL-MECHANICAL RAILCARS

M1	Fairbanks-Morse	1A	built 1915	50 h.p.	retired 1927	sold
M2	Mc Keen	B-2	" 1913	200	" 1927	ex-DL&NW M1 in 1917, to Union Pacific M1 in 1927
M2	"	"	"	"	"	" " M2 " " " " " M2 " "

## THE OTHER GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY

BY Mike Walker

The Great Western Railway is alive and well on the high plains of northern Colorado. It serves both Windsor and Eaton and has the extreme good taste to have a station called Walker! However, this is a very different GWR to the one which was controlled from an address in W2 and yet it can offer much to interest the enthusiast, despite its mere 57.7 route miles.

The area north of Denver at the foot of the Rockies is fertile arable country noted since the late 19th century for the production of sugar beet. Initially this was taken to Kansas for processing but in 1900 the newly formed Great Western Sugar Company built a refinery in the area at Loveland. One harvest was sufficient to show the problems of moving beets over primitive roads, so the company set up a subsidiary, the Great Western Railway Co. in 1901. Whilst primarily to serve the sugar industry this would also be a common carrier railroad.

Compared to the mountain lines further west, the GWR presented no constructional problems for its chief engineer, octagenarian J.F. Frankenberger, and principal contractor William A. Riley. The entire 58.2 mile network was completed between 1902 and 1907. The accompanying map gives full details. Initially operations were handled using locomotives hired from neighbouring Colorado & Southern as was the rolling stock, but in 1903 50 gondolas were ordered followed by 100 more in 1905. Between these came the first GWR locomotive, a Baldwin 2-8-0, again see appendix.

In 1917 the GWR was expanded greatly by the acquisition of 28 miles of the Denver, Laramie & Northwestern. Conceived as a main line from Denver to Seattle, it ran out of money in 1911 and its rails never progressed beyond Greeley. It was strategically important to the infant GWR but the Elm-Greeley and Wattenburg - Denver sections were abandoned as the sugar road had non competition agreements with both the Colorado & Southern and Union Pacific. All the DLNW trackage has now been abandoned, the only part of the original GWR to close being the half mile Duke spur.

As already mentioned the GWR is a common carrier and even provided a meagre passenger service in a veteran combine passenger/baggage car attached to freights. As can be imaged timetables were virtually unknown and local residents complained to the Colorado Public Utilities Commission in 1914. Despite being only 50 miles away Denver was a two day round trip. The PUC suggested the GWR purchase a railcar. The result was a four wheel car looking like a streetcar. Highly unstable at any speed, it is reported to have derailed regularly and been highly unpopular, being nicknamed the "Goat". Salvation came with the purchase of the DLNW which included two modern (for the period) railcars, at last a respectable service could be provided, with Denver accessible in a day, via the Union Pacific. Eventually the district's roads were paved, cars and buses appeared and the GWR withdrew passenger service in 1927. Henceforth the few passengers wishing to travel did so in the caboose of a freight train.

Freight remained fairly healthy, except during the worst of the recession and did little to attract the attention of the public. By the second war nine locomotives were in operation, six Consolidations, a pair of switchers and a massive 2-10-0. Disaster nearly struck early one Sunday morning in 1940 when the engine shed at Loveland burned to the ground. Locomotives 2, 51 and 60 were hauled out but 1, 52 and 75 were badly damaged and had to

be rebuilt by the C & S shops in Denver. A new shed was erected at Loveland shortly after and remains today, complete with chocolate and cream doors!

In the early postwar years the GWR started evaluating various models of diesel-electric locomotive. These trials resulted in the purchase of three EMD switcher type units of two models, these were able to handle most of the day to day traffic but four steam locomotives were retained for use during the peak harvest periods up to the mid sixties, making the GWR a popular pilgrimage for enthusiasts. Eventually all for four were sold for preservation and two more EMD switchers were purchased secondhand.

The purchase of used locomotives reflected the decline of the railway's finances. Much general freight traffic had been lost to road competition and even some beet traffic was starting to be moved by truck. In 1978 the railway was put up for sale by Great Western Sugar. The purchaser was Inter-Rail Inc., a subsidiary of Mid Rail inc., in turn a subsidiary of Midland Resources. The latter was soon rumoured to be a laundry operation for a noted New Jersey underworld figure! When payments were defaulted a court order returned title to Great Western Sugar, who still own the railroad.

The GWR has had its share of incidents and stories. A major problem for the road is the harsh winters but 1913 was particularly severe. Nos. 1 and 2 were on the Eaton branch, 1 in Windsor yard and 2 became stuck in a deep cutting near Severence. After spending three days attempting to move 1 under her own power, forty men were hired and spent a whole day digging the loco out. Once freed she set off to rescue 2, by now buried up to the top of the boiler. More digging released No.2 and both engines set off with a borrowed Union Pacific snow plough to re-open the rest of the line to Loveland and Longmont.

With a small road everyone knew each other on a first name basis and employee relations were good but occasionally there were men who did not fit in! The handwritten record book shows a man fired for being "dangerous for other employees to work with", another "absolutely no good" whilst a third committed the ultimate sin on a sugar road being described as a "dead beet"! Worst of all, during a spell of hot weather in 1914 a train crew pulled onto the Denver Laramie & Northwestern tracks at Milliken and parked in front of a saloon leaving the train unattended whilst they had a cool drink. The entire crew save the engineer, who had a perfect seven year record, were fired.

There are no signals to be found on the GWR. They installed one once at Johnstown Station. However it was somewhat unreliable and, being the only signal, engineers and conductors regularly forgot to look at it! It was soon removed and the line is now controlled by written train orders and two-way radio.

The GWR today is enjoying a revival. Northern Colorado is enjoying something of an economic boom. This has brought additional freight traffic to the line. The former Great Western Sugar factory in Johnstown was sold in 1982 to Adolph Coors, who operate the world's largest brewery of Golden west of Denver, for experimental purposes. This could well be expanded into another major manufacturing plant producing valuable traffic for the GWR. Perhaps in anticipation, three of the switchers were sold in exchange for a trio of EMD GP7 road units. These are the most powerful locos to run on the GW and introduce a vivid new orange and black livery in place of the former blue and yellow.

Two new sources of revenue have been exploited. Idle siding space has been rented out to other railroads to store unused freight cars. As many as three hundred cars have been present at any given time.

The other source of income is passengers! Fifty-six years after service was finally withdrawn the GWR discovered that people would pay to ride on trains particularly if steam hauled! Baldwin 2-8-0, 51, had been sold to local businessman John Birmingham and kept in working order in Denver. In 1983 it returned to Loveland for a handful of special trips. These proved so successful that during the summer of 1984 the company has been running 51 on a mixed train every Sunday and Holiday. Leaving Loveland at 1 p.m. it conveys two passenger cars and whatever freight is on offer. Depending on traffic requirements, the train runs to Windsor, Eaton, Johnstown or Longmont, the round trip taking about three hours. Believed to be the last steam hauled mixed train in North America the operation has been immensely successful. Unfortunately, the season was cut short on 29th July due to impending legal action from a local farmer miffed at having his fields set alight by 51's exhaust - just like home!

That then is the brief story of Colorado's own Great Western Railway. Far removed from our own hallowed line, it has the typical charm of an American shortlines, where vintage equipment is operated by friendly crews and anything goes - well almost. Hopefully 51 will be allowed to continue and, should you be in the area, details can be had from the Great Western Railway Co., Loveland Depot, P.O. Box 537, Loveland. Colorado 80539.

P.S. For those of you who do not adore our GWR, the US also had a Great Northern, now part of Burlington Northern, a Southern Railway, now Norfolk & Southern, and even a L & NER, the Lehigh & New England, whilst Canada had a Midland Railway also now part of BN. Why does the GWR always survive?

---

## 25 YEARS AGO

by R.D. Bowen

After a hectic period of new developments, new locomotive classes etc., the autumn of 1959 brought rather a quiet spell.

London Transport brought into full use its new depot at Upminster. This was the first completely new depot to be built since the war and took 34 eight car trains. A new lifting shop was provided for full maintenance of stock, being the only one on the east side of London serving the District Line.

British Railways North Eastern Region announced plans for a comprehensive modernisation scheme for Leeds. This would involve the reconstruction of City Station and the complete closure of the nearby Central Station. The work was due to take four years. The Eastern Region announced plans to build a new station at Harlow to serve the new town. This would be on the site of Burnt Mill Station, the existing Harlow Station would be renamed Harlow Mill. London Transport announced the planned rebuilding of Wapping Station on the East London Line which had been seriously damaged in an air raid in September 1940.



On September 15th, the Centenary of the death of I.K. Brunel, the President and Council of the Institution of Civil Engineers attended the unveiling of a plaque on the Clifton Suspension Bridge. They travelled to Bristol on the 1.15 p.m. from Paddington hauled by "Castle" Class locomotive 5069 "Isambard Kingdom Brunel" which carried a commemorative plaque on its smokebox.

London Road Station, Manchester, was, it was announced, due to be renamed Piccadilly as part of a modernisation scheme due for completion in 1962 in connection with the electrification of the line to Crew. As part of the run up for the main line electrification all expresses from Euston to Birmingham and Wolverhampton were withdrawn from 2nd November and an augmented service provided from Paddington. Some services to Manchester were diverted to St. Pancras.

Civil engineering works commenced for the quadrupling of the 6½ miles of the Metropolitan Line between Harrow and Watford South Junction (North of Moor Park).

Generally much less hectic than over the last few months, but only a lull as plenty of developments were on their way as the expansionist 50's gave way to the dramatic cuts of the 60's.

---

#### NARROW GAUGE IN BEDFORDSHIRE

by R.D. Bowen

Just across the county boundary from Buckinghamshire lies the small town of Leighton Buzzard, home of the Leighton Buzzard Narrow Gauge Railway.

Many members will remember it from our visit a few years ago, now the line has been extended and the number of serviceable steam locomotives increased. The line is of two foot gauge, built in 1919 to carry sand from the quarries in the north of the town to the main line of the London and North Western Railway. Apart from its opening day the line never had a passenger service until 1967 when a group of enthusiasts formed a Society to save the line.

The line wends its way from its terminus at Pages Park, past one of the many sand quarries in the area, through new housing estates and industrial areas to open countryside. The latter being a newly re-opened extension in 1983. The return trip of five and a half miles takes an hour and ten minutes.

There are four steam locomotives currently in working order, "Chaloner", 0-4-OVB, built by De Winton of Caernarvon in 1877, the last working example of its type; "Pixie", 0-4-OST, built by Kerr Stuart in 1922 as a contractors locomotive; "Rishra", 0-4-OT, built by Baguley in 1921 and spent all her working life hauling coal by the Hoogly River in India; and "Elf", a wood burning 0-6-OWT, built by Orenstein and Koppel in 1936 and worked at a rubber mill in the French Cameroons. There are two further steam locomotive under restoration, "the Doll", an 0-6-OT, built by Barclay in 1919 and "P C Allen", built by Orenstein and Koppel in 1912. There are also a number of diesel locomotives, some of which worked on the line prior to 1967.

The railway operates on Sundays only, 8th April to 30th September, also Bank Holiday Mondays, Good Friday, Easter Saturday and additionally Wednesdays in August. The adult return fare is £1.60, half price for children 5 to 15 years and senior citizens.

A visit to the line is a must both for those who have never been and those who have missed the developments of the past few years.

---

### NARROW GAUGE BY THE MERSEY

by R.D. Bowen

A most unlikely venue for railway enthusiasts to make for in 1984 is the International Garden Festival in Liverpool.

This is Britain's first International Garden Festival and is designed specifically to improve part of Britain's most run down City. Those who visited Liverpool with the Society in 1979 for "Rocket 150" will vouch for the need to do something to improve this area of Liverpool.

The promoters of the Garden Festival, aware that the large size of the exhibition meant a need for public transport within the site, wisely adopted the 15 inch miniature railway as its basic form of transport. The "main line" consists of a "squashed circle" about two miles in length with the mid point stretch so arranged as to give the appearance of a double track main line. There is also a branch line to one of the main entrances. The track is well laid and fully signalled. The Festival relies heavily on sponsorship and accordingly the signalling has been provided by GEC General Signals.

A number of locomotives operate on the line. When visited in June only two were operating on the main line, "River Irt" and "Shelah of Eskdale", both from the Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway. However, a number of Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch locomotives were due to be present, notably "Black Prince" and "Sampson". These locomotives are sponsored by the National Westminster Bank, as are the carriages, some from the RHDR and some built specially for the line at Steamtown, Carnforth. The Branch shuttle is worked by the Ravenglass and Eskdale diesel unit in full APT colours!! Sponsored by BR of course!!

The main line is quite heavily graded and therefore the sound of a fully laden train is not to be missed. The exhibition is already doing better than estimated and even in June there were long queues at each of the four stations.

The Festival is open until October. BR are offering special "packages" and from High Wycombe £16 will buy you a day return inclusive of entrance fee and bus transfer from Lime Street. Incidentally, there is a local station on the "Merseyrail" near the Festival - "St. Michaels" is its name, guess who sponsored its rebuilding for the Festival!