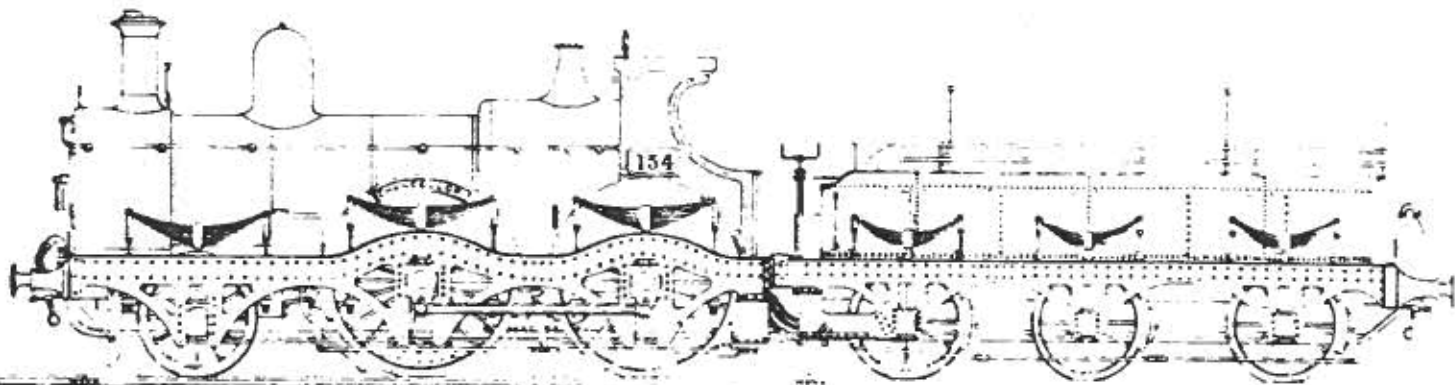


*Marlow & District
Railway Society*

"The Marlow Donkey"

No. 33 DECEMBER 1984



Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year
to all
Members



Marlow & District Railway Society

Please reply to:

No.33

December 1984

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

1984, the eight year of our Society's existence, has seen a number of changes. At the beginning of the year we learned with considerable regret that the "Marlow Donkey" would no longer be our venue for meetings and other social occasions. The reconstructed inn would provide no clubroom. We were very fortunate to find fresh accommodation in 'The Chequers', which has a much pleasanter room for our monthly meetings.

Everyone was very sorry to lose our Treasurer, Stan Verrinder, a founder member of the Society, was moved by the Civil Service to Eastbourne. His enthusiasm and hard work are sorely missed, but Mike Walker has succeeded Stan energetically and our finances are in good hands. Roger Bowen, as Secretary, decided to step down after a very effective seven-year stint, although continuing as a committee member. Peter Greatorex is proving a first-rate replacement for Roger.

No doubt the Society's recent activities will be reviewed at our AGM in January but a brief reminder of the talks and journeys of 1984 is worth recording here. Last August a party of our members travelled on the Kennet and Avon Canal following a most informative talk. A dozen of us travelled along the threatened Settle and Carlisle line. Recently four members were able to ride behind Flying Scotsman on a SLOA Pullman special. The Society's annual outing took us along the Great Central's preserved line from Loughborough.

The high standard of speakers has been maintained, subjects covered including South American and South African railways, the fine work being done at Bridgnorth, the Trans-Siberian Railway and the railways of Ireland.

Elsewhere in this Newsletter we can read of the GW150 celebration promised for 1985. Let us hope these journeys and exhibitions are not over-priced by BR. Railway buffs are keen to spend money on their hobby but can easily be deterred by excessively high fares and entrance charges.

BR are running shopping specials to Milton Keynes in the run-up to Christmas. Our local train is the 'Chiltern Shopper' which is booked to stop at Quainton Road and Winslow (closed in 1965!). I understand other trains are being run from other areas.

A very well-attended open day at Didcot on 29th September provided an interesting collection of steam engines. In addition to the normal GWS stock LMS Jubilee No.5690 was busy on the exhibition line, the sole-surviving Dukedog, 'Earl of Berkeley', was on a visit from the Bluebell Line, and a smart little Victorian 'Terrier', No.32670, had come from the Kent and East Sussex Railway.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES - continued

Next April we shall welcome as our guest speaker David Shepherd, the well-known artist and owner of the East Somerset Railway Centre. We are planning to visit Cranmore next July as our annual family outing.

We shall wish all our members a Very Happy Christmas at the dinner to be held at 'The Chequers' on the 22nd of December and hope to see them again at the AGM in January.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

by M.W.

The December "Donkey" is usually accompanied by a request for your renewed subscription, this year is a little different. As you know the annual subscription has been £2.00 since the club was founded in 1976. This year however our enforced change of venue has caused a massive increase in costs hence the rise of the meeting subscription to 50p in April. We still hope to keep the £2.00 Subscription for one more year, but will know better when the year end accounts are finalised. A final decision will be made after debate at the A.G.M., after which Subscription renewals will be due (except new members joining after October 1984).

One way of ensuring subscriptions do not rise is to attend monthly meetings regularly as meeting subs., are our chief source of income. We need at least 30 members to attend each month to break even. This Autumn failed to make it any one month, and concern is growing in the Committee as to the reasons for this apparent loss of interest.

Come on chaps its YOUR Society and it needs YOUR support.

NORTH AMERICAN ANNUAL REVIEW - 1984

by Mike Walker

In what has generally been an unremarkable year in North American railroading most headlines seem to revolve around the Southern Pacific and the 'World's Fair' held during the summer in New Orleans.

1984 was the year that the SP paid the required sponsorship fee to become the "Official Railroad to the Olympic Games" parking a train of business cars alongside the Coliseum for good measure. It was also the year that it became involved in the latest mega-merger. The SP and Santa Fé merged their parent companies in December 1983 and are now applying to the Interstate Commerce Commission to merge the actual railroads. In January the Santa Fé absorbed its Toledo Peoria & Western subsidiary whilst SP is absorbing its Cotton Belt subsidiary. The 25,500 mile "Santa Fé-Pacific" may grow even larger, SP is negotiating to take over the Denver & Rio Grande Western and Santa Fé is a major contender to buy Conrail when privatised. This would create the first true U.S. transcontinental stretching 43,000 miles from Atlantic to Pacific, Canada to Mexico.

The Union Pacific meanwhile, having removed almost all trace of the Western Pacific, has turned its attention to the Missouri Pacific where Jenks Blue diesels with their screaming eagle and buzzsaw motifs are being repainted to UP style Armor Yellow, but with MP lettering, at the rate of 4 or 5 a day.

Motive power fans, particularly those of steam, had a year to remember. In March Union Pacific despatched 4-8-4 8444 from Cheyenne to New Orleans for display outside the road's pavilion at the World's Fair. It returned north in November and in its absence "Challenger" 3985 had the honour of hauling both spring and autumn Denver-Laramie excursions. Although hauling passenger cars, 8444's ferry trips did not carry passengers. In contrast the SP, previously anti-steam, allowed its beautiful GS4 4-8-4 4449 to run the "Louisiana Daylight". Leaving Portland, Oregon, on 5th May it ran down the west coast to Los Angeles then east to New Orleans, where it was displayed from 2nd-9th June, then back to Portland reached on 29th June after 7,477 steam hauled miles. Naturally the train was a sellout with thousands more watching the loco and its thirteen cars, all in SP's orange, red, white and black Daylight livery, pass by. In Colorado the return to service of the only working ex-DRGW K-37 narrow gauge 2-8-2, 497, on the Durango & Silverton went largely unnoticed.

As far as diesels are concerned, both builders had another quiet year, although order books filled during the summer as the much vaunted economic recovery filtered to the railroads, who became more optimistic about the future. Both EMD and GE contrived to perfect their micro-processor controlled locomotive. EMD started road trials of its new, third generation, 710 series engine whilst GE set a new horsepower record for a four axle diesel, 3,900 h.p. on the B39-8, the year's only new model and delivered to the Santa Fé (7400/7401).

In this article last year the scrapping of the Union Pacific mighty 'Centennial' units was reported. A handful of units suffered that fate, but in January the UP found itself desperately short of power due to maintenance problems on the ex-WP and MP lines. This was met by draughting in UP units, and to fill the gap "at home", first two, then twenty five of the huge, 236 ton 6,600 h.p. D-D's were returned to traffic after four years storage in the California desert. In a glorious summer they made an unforgettable sight powering heavy freights over Wyoming's Sherman Summit, just as the "Big Boys" had a quarter century before, witnessed by a small party of MDRS members. They even hauled the diesel sections of both Denver-Laramie excursions and 6922 had the honour of rescuing Amtrak's eastbound "Pioneer" on 31st July. However, the arrival of sixty EMD SD50's this autumn will probably silence the World's largest diesels for ever.

Amtrak's year was unspectacular, One new train, the 'Gulf Coast Limited', restored service between Mobile and New Orleans for the first time since 1971 and ran in connection with the World's Fair. This event also led to upgrading of the "City of New Orleans" from Chicago. The Kansas City-St Louis service was also extended to connect with the "City" and provide through cars to the Gulf for the summer. Generally ridership showed continued growth, leading to a shortage of cars. No new equipment was purchased in the year, but Budd started work on the prototype new single level long distance cars. The premium "Metroliner" service was extended to Amtrak's second busiest route San Diego-Los Angeles in the spring.

Amtrak's Canadian counterpart, VIA, may look back on '84 as a milestone. Prime Minister Trudeau replaced anti-rail Transport Minister Prepin with pro-rail John Axworth who started to restore some of Prepin's 1981 cuts, set in motion plans for new double deck transcontinental cars (not "Superliners")

and authorised more LRC trains for inter-city service in the east. It remains to be seen what effect the Conservative victory in the General Election will have on VIA.

British Columbia's new Tumbler Ridge branch got into full swing with electric traction early in the year after limited diesel operation late in '83. Up to 5 million tons of coal a year will move via Prince George and the CN to a new terminal near Prince Rupert for export to Japan.

Construction during the year was limited. The largest project was Santa Fé's new coal line into the heart of New Mexico's Navajo country. Otherwise construction work was mainly confined to relocations and rapid transit schemes, opening in Miami, extending in San Francisco, San Diego and Atlanta, building in Portland Oregon and Vancouver B.C., planning in Dallas and Los Angeles. In New York City work continues on a new tunnel to link the former New York Central Hudson River mainline with Penn Station. This will allow all Amtrak trains to use Penn, whilst Grand Central will become a commuter only station. How the mighty are humbled.

THE FENMAN

Wednesday evening, the 'phone rang. It was Pete Greatorex. "What you doing Saturday, fancy doing Manchester to Spalding behind "Flying Scotsman" on the SLOA Pullman?. Ten seconds deliberation, was this a wind up?, and 4472 is an LNER loco. "Yes, Please".

Thus it was a small group was found on Stevenage station on the morning of November 10th. Departure time passed, no train. Perhaps it was a wind up, the tickets after all were for the "Cumbrian Mountain Express". Ultimately 47,519 wheezed into the station at the head of 10 SLOA Pullman cars, a BR Mk1 Kitchen/Buffer and Bill McAlpines' superb GE No1 saloon on the rear.

At Peterborough we were joined by 190 members of the Cambridge Railway Club, including Brent Hudson (of Trans-Siberian Fame), perpetrator of the original tip off to Pete. The northbound run was a mixture of slow and slower running, this was the SLOA Pullman on the Late & Never Early Railway after all, the more charitable considered 47,519 was firing on four. By the time we reached Leeds we were nearly an hour down and as 47,519 ran round Mr. Bill decided to forgo No.1's open balcony and have lunch!

The relief driver obviously found top gear because 47,519 lost no more time on the difficult L & Y route over the Pennines. As we entered Manchester Victoria, 4472 was already awaiting us and by the time we detrained was backing down, propelling its support car, an ex-BR Mk1 'BG' loaded with tools, spares and it was rumoured extra coal - we were headed for Yorkshire!

A class 37 diesel stood by as a banker, but 4472's crew decided to go it alone. A wise decision as she stormed up the In 53 to Miles Platting with only a slight touch of wheelslip and that classic Gresley 3 cylinder bark rebounding off the surrounding buildings. The sharp curve at the summit

THE FENMAN - continued

gave a clear view of a white plume from the safety valves set against a jet black exhaust as more coal went into the firebox.

"Flying Scotsman" was on her way from Carnforth to March in readiness to work a Royal Train for HM The Queen Mother to Woolwich on November 20th. The trip had been arranged at very short notice, hence the lack of advertisements in the magazines. Never the less the enthusiast jungle telegraph was working well and literally thousands watched our passage.

Our route took us through Belle Vue to New Mills and then via Chinley and the scenic Hope Valley line to Sheffield our first water stop. Thus far we had been on a recognised "BR Steam" route but now we were on new ground, even freight only lines as we made a circuit through South Yorkshire by way of Darnell, Bighton and Barrow Hill to rejoin the Midland mainline at Chesterfield.

An extra stop was made at Alfreton & Mansfield Parkway to allow three trainloads of Spurs supporters to leave Nottingham ahead of us, 4472 and Pullman's being seen as a red rag to a bull! However, the Glasgow-Parkeston Quay "European" was hard on our heels so the announced 15 minute stop was cut short, nearly stranding your Secretary and Treasurer on a bridge engaging in some night exposures!

Approaching Nottingham 4472 was saluted by a lineside traction engine, which won an exchange of whistles, the A3 was not in the best of voice as far as whistling was concerned. At Nottingham 4472 left the train briefly for servicing and the party was serviced in the Restaurant Car, the crew seemed not amused by taking in ones own Chateau Sainsbury's.

Off again on the last leg, by now in darkness but still the crowds were there and much, probably wasted, flash photography was tried. Back on the Eastern Region we passed under the ECML at Barkston, north of Grantham, and so to Sleaford. Cars paced us for miles, others hit the brakes in panic as 4472 sent her exhaust swirling over road bridges where steam had not been seen in more than 15 years.

Running across the Fens from Sleaford to Spalding was pure nostalgia. A fullish moon illuminated the open country covered in a ground mist coming off the Wash. Above 4472's exhaust billowed more than a train length in the cold air, illuminated near the locomotive by the glow of the fire. Mike Norris was almost in a trance and we were all moved to silence and appreciation. The March crew gave us some of the days best running but all to soon we arrived at Spalding where the whole town seemed to have turned out. 4472 and the BG were uncoupled to run light to March and 47,528 took over to run us back to Stevanage.

Over 145 miles and 7 hours of steam haulage which none of us will forget in a hurry. Special thanks to Brent Hudson for the tip, SLOA for the train and, of course, Bill McAlpine for keeping "Flying Scotman" going at the age of 61.

First Year

With our Family Rail Card we set off from High Wycombe station and arrived at King's Cross in good time for the 12.00 train "The Aberdonian". We reached Edinburgh on time, 16.44. We left on time, but we had just passed through Haymarket station, when we stopped. After about twenty minutes the guard came on the intercom and said we would be returning to Edinburgh station for repairs to the front power car. After about thirty minutes we again set off for Aberdeen. This part of the journey was slow because we had lost our "path". We arrived in Aberdeen two hours late. The return journey went like a dream. We arrived five minutes early at King's Cross.

Second Year

We had trouble right from the start because the signalman at Gerrards Cross box failed to report for duty. It was a Monday morning! So we reached Marylebone station thirty minutes late. This meant we had to rush to get to King's Cross for the 10.00 train to Edinburgh. We had a pleasant journey but arrived ten minutes late, just in time to get to Platform 17 and the train to Aberdeen. When we reached Arbroath station the train was stationary for a long time. I looked out of the window and saw a crowd round the Class 47 at the head of our train. The driver said a lubricating oil pipe had split and oil was pouring out. He said he wasn't going any further with THIS loco! Before the train was shunted into a siding all the passengers were asked to dismount and wait on the platform for another train. About thirty minutes later a train from Birmingham (I think) arrived which was so crowded some passengers had to stand - including me. We eventually rolled into Aberdeen about an hour late. There were no problems on the return journey.

Third Year

My wife took the children to Scotland. All the trains were on time.

Fourth Year

The Aberdonian had been retimed to leave King's Cross at 10.00. We arrived in good time. The train departed ten minutes late. Near Grantham there was a signal failure; a twenty minute delay. We made good time (running about thirty minutes late) till we reached north of Berwick. The train had now stopped. After about fifteen minutes the guard came on the intercom and said, "All the signals are out between here and Edinburgh". The next part of the journey was chaotic. When we at last arrived in Edinburgh the train was so late the guard said the train would terminate at Edinburgh. The train was actually booked through to Aberdeen. A number of passengers in our coach thumped the tables and said they were going to tell Jimmy Savile what he could do with his train! After waiting forty-five minutes we left Edinburgh at 17.00 (we should have been in Aberdeen at 17.30) on an all-stations train to Aberdeen. Again there were no problems on the return journey.

This year we decided to drive up to Aberdeen. NO PROBLEMS.

BOOK REVIEW

by R.T. Brooks

This time, as the Christmas season is here, we concentrate on a 'good read' with a touch of the horrors, just right for a comfortable chair, a good fire, and a glass of something cheering.

'HISTORIC RAILWAY DISASTERS' by O.S. Nock

Arrow Books 50p
0 09 003410 4

The very high degree of safety enjoyed by the railways has been bought by the experience of accidents, most of them extraordinarily involved with human error. They are all here - including the inexplicable.

'THE HIGH GIRDERS' by John Prebble

Pan 5/-
330 02162 1

When the railways were first constructed the civil engineering was not only at the frontiers of knowledge, it was frequently out in front. The first Tay Bridge was one that failed - the temptation is to write "the only one that failed". The whole fascinating story is here, more enthralling than a novel.

'THE CAVAN & LEITRIM RAILWAY' by Patrick J. Flanagan

David & Charles 50p
0 330 02942 8

'THE COUNTY DONEGAL RAILWAYS' by Edward M. Patterson

David & Charles 50p
0 330 02941 X

These two volumes provide the light relief, but the politics and problems as well as the service provided to the local population are well covered. Some interesting black and white illustrations.

'THE RAILWAY RACE TO THE NORTH' by O.S. Nock

Ian Allen 6/-

We all know that the racing took place and here is the detail by a wellknown expert. It has taken the electrics to beat them for time but we will draw a veil over the load on the hook.

A CHRISTMAS STORY

Last year, you may remember, the annual film show together with an unfortunate surfeit of pickles combined to give me a remarkable insight into the origins of the Fawley Junction Railway. This year I was determined to avoid such a ghastly experience and concentrated instead in a strict diet and regular visits to Fawley, which was, of course, my undoing because at lunch time on a mild Autumn afternoon, when I could no longer stand the sight of all those sandwiches, with pickles, disappearing happily inside the volunteers, I walked down the track and sat under a tree to meditate for the remainder of the lunch break.

A CHRISTMAS STORY - continued

There was a distinct rustle in a nearby bush. Was it the GOAT OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT? It emerged without a hiss or clank but it did clutch between its hooves a return ticket to Eastbourne, and it was eating a leek with a daffodil behind its ear. I know a ghost when I see one. "You did well last year" it bleated, "but this year you must tell the Marlow and District how the Fawley Junction Railway fares today".

It was quite unnecessary for the apparition to utter any threats. The horror of puffing up and down all those valleys, to say nothing of looking out of both sides at the same time was still with me. I offered it 50p, a habit now forced upon me by the current Treasurer, but it couldn't seem to understand the new price and the enthusiasm to collect wasn't there. The past year by the seaside had had its effect.

From my vantage point I could see the station - resplendent in a new coat of paint, with its yard and fencing and a phone box, shining in the sunlight. I could see in my mind's eye the superb gas lamps over the platform and the waiting room resplendent with opulent upholstered furniture just crying out for first class passengers in top hats and frock coats to toast their toes at the coal fire in the grate. Imaginary children tugged at Mama's skirts for a penny to put into the chocolate machine, or yet another check on their weight, while Papa purchased the tickets at the office.

A faint tinkle of bells and the rhythmic click of the telegraph indicator gives warning of an approaching train - even if the passenger accommodation is an open truck newly overhauled, painted and lettered in the Fawley livery. When all are aboard the bell code to the Signal Box obtains a green light at the signal head on the platform and the train passes the points at the start of its journey through the wilds of South Bucks. At the last moment the enclosure gate is swung open, and after the train has passed, immediately closed. On go the intrepid travellers, passing the lake, and a herd of ferocious goats browsing on everything in sight. There is a pause at the sidings with passing loops, where the train is reversed for the long haul down the valley to the rail head.

On the return journey a shrill whistle from the engine ensures a clear run up to the station where the passengers, now more informally and comfortably dressed, disembark to allow the engine some respite and a drink of water at the column. Meanwhile, more passengers have arrived from the Museum building and are anxiously awaiting the return of the train to have their umpteenth ride of the afternoon. So we repeat the whole intricate interplay of signals, points, steams, coal, water, telegraphs, wire - WIRES!..... At this point I came out of my dream. I was supposed to be checking the wires on a work day and if it wasn't properly done it might not work at the next steam up and spoil the day for our visitors. Without a doubt the other volunteers, full of lunch, were already hard at work.

I wonder how many years these goats, sorry, ghosts turn up? I shall have to refer to Dickens or perhaps just wait till next year. By the way, does anyone know where we could get some car stickers bearing the words, "We've visited the GOATS of FAWLEY"?

As 1959 turned into 1960 the most publicised event was the delivery to British Railways of the first locomotive to be built for the a.c. electrification of the London Midland Region. The contractor, British-Thompson-Houston Co, Ltd. was due to supply 25 complete locomotives, the mechanical parts being sub-contracted to the Birmingham Railway Carriage and Wagon Co. Ltd. The first locomotive No.E3001 was designed to haul a 475 ton passenger train at 100 mph, being of 3,300 hp continuous rating. It was finished in a new blue livery with the British Railways emblems in the raised stainless steel characters.

New orders for electric stock were being placed too. For Eastern Region services between Liverpool Street and Enfield, Chingford, Hertford East and Bishops Stortford 52 three car sets were ordered from York works and 19 four car sets from Doncaster. 20 four car units were ordered from Wolverton for Liverpool to Crewe local services. Finally 59 four car and 46 two car sets were ordered from Eastleigh for the second phase of the Kent Coast Electrification scheme.

Regrettably closures were still occurring. On November 2nd the branch from Ebbw Vale Junction to Ebbw Vale and the last surviving section of the Abergavenny-Merthyr line were closed to goods traffic. On January 4th passenger trains were withdrawn between Newbury and Lambourne; Northampton Castle and Blisworth; Northampton Castle and Market Harborough; Wigan North Western and Blackburn via Chorley; and Bidstone to Seacombe on the Wirral. Six sections of the C.I.E. in Ireland closed, also the last section of the County Donegal Railways Joint Committee, both on 1st January.

Locally in January 1960 the Metropolitan Line Bridge at Amersham was replaced in a major scheme to widen the road underneath and to provide a storage siding for the new electric services. On 4th January sweeping changes were made to the Great Central services when all through trains between Marylebone, Sheffield, Manchester and Bradford were replaced by a "semi-fast" service between Marylebone and Nottingham.

The Southern Region received some Western pannier tanks for use on service from Wadebridge and Exmouth Junction. Maunsell "Z" class tanks were being used for banking on the incline between Exeter Central and St. Davids and replaced the last ex-LBSCR Stroudley "E1R" class, the very last being 32697 built in 1876.

The Swansea and Mumbles Railway, the first line in the world on which fare paying passengers were named was closed completely on 5th January 1960 after a working life of more than 150 years. Worked originally by horses, steam traction was introduced in 1877. It was electrified in 1929.

On 4th January 1960 a new halt was opened at Park Leaze, between Kemple and Chesterton Lane Halt on the Cirencester branch, Western Region. The branch was being operated by one of the experimental railbuses.

A sad occasion on the Eastern Region was the first withdrawals of Gresley Pacifics other than one damaged beyond repair in the war.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO - continued

All in all therefore the usual mix for the period of new stock being delivered, line closures and veteran stock going, but perhaps more indication for the future, the significant delivery of the first main line electric locomotives and the first withdrawal of Gresley Pacifics on the Eastern Region.

NARROW GAUGE IN THE TYNE VALLEY

by R.D. Bowen

The South Tynedale Railway is one of the country's most recent narrow gauge railway projects. Its route runs, at present, for just over a mile northwards from the town of Alston, in Cumbria, along the track bed of the closed Haltwhistle to Alston branch of the North Eastern Railway.

Alston is England's highest town and for many years its only straightforward link to the north at Haltwhistle was the railway line. Indeed to this day the road links from its nearest larger towns of Penrith and Hexham are by very tortuous roads.

The Haltwhistle-Alston branch left the North Eastern's line from Newcastle to Carlisle by a tight curving junction at Haltwhistle facing Carlisle giving the rarely taken up opportunity of a through train from Carlisle to Alston. The line climbed heavily over the Slaggyford Viaduct in the South Tyne Valley up to Alston. It was the lack of roads in this valley that caused refusal to close decisions from the Minister after the line was included in the "Beeching" list. Inevitably the roads were improved and the line closed to all traffic on 1st May 1975.

Because of its scenic nature a preservation bid was made for the whole standard gauge branch but this did not attract sufficient funds. The present project is for a two foot gauge line from Alston as far as the Slaggyford Viaduct. Services over the first mile commenced earlier in 1984 with the only operational stock a Motor Rail-Simplex diesel and two carriages. An important steam locomotive is under restoration however. The station buildings have been restored extensively and are very attractive.

One cannot but wish such venture well and hope for its future. It has been very fortunate in obtaining funds and labour from the local Council, Manpower Services projects and EEC Regional Funds and it is hoped that it has enough support locally to make it succeed. If you are on holiday in Cumbria or Northumberland next year why not visit this attractive line and find out its attractions?

DETAILS OF NEXT YEARS GW150 EVENT

Swindon Exhibition:

1st August to 1st September inclusive.
Plans to include a working replica of broad gauge locomotive 'Iron Duke' offering passenger rides.
Other exhibits include several GWR main line steam locomotives

Exhibition Train:

A travelling exhibition train of smaller items of Great Western memorabilia, together with a section on the current and future railway. Books and paintings, some especially commissioned, will be on display, including some for sale.
Entrance free.

30,31	May	Paddington	3,4,5	July	Merthyr
1,2	June	Didcot	6,7,8,9,10	July	Cardiff
5,6,7	June	Birmingham Moor St.	12	July	Port Talbot
8,9	June	Tyseley Railway Museum	13,14,15	July	Carmarthen
11,12	June	Chester	16,17	July	Tenby
14,15,16	June	Aberystwyth	18	July	Haverfordwest
18,19,20	June	Shrewsbury	20,21	July	Barry Island
21,	June	Wolverhampton	25,26,27	July	Truro
22,23,24	June	Severn Valley Railway	28,29	July	Penzance
26,27	June	Hereford	30,31	July	Plymouth
29,30	June)	Newport	1	August	Newton Abbot
1	July)		28,29,30,31,	August)	
2,3,4,5	August	Paignton	1	September)	Swindon Exhibitio
7,8	August	Exeter	4,5	September	Worcester
9	August	Barnstaple	8	September	Llandrindod Wells
10,11	August	Taunton	9	September	Llandovery
12,13	August	Weston-super-Mre	10,11	September	Llanelli
14,15	August	Salisbury	13,14	September	Reading
17,18	August	Forest of Dean Railway	15	September	O.O. Common
20,21,22	August	Gloucester	16,17,18	September	Paddington
24,25,26,)	August	Bristol	20,21,22	September	Swansea
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Many local events are being planned in support of this program.

Steam Excursions:

SLOA	7 April	Paddington to Plymouth via Bristol. Steam hauled Bristol to Plymouth.
	8 April	Plymouth to Bristol
	7 July	Paddington to Plymouth via Bristol. Steam hauled Bristol to Plymouth
	14 July	Paddington to Plymouth via Bristol and return. Steam hauled Plymouth to Bristol.
	1 Sept.	Paddington to Plymouth via Bristol. Steam hauled Bristol to Plymouth.

Steam Excursions - continued

8 Sept. Paddington to Plymouth via Bristol and return. Steam hauled Plymouth to Bristol.

Swindon to Gloucester: No further details yet.

Swansea to Carmarthen: Sept.21 and Sept.22.
Three return trips a day.

Maintenance Depot Open Days:

June 1 - Reading
July 6 - Cardiff Canton and Cathays
Aug. 31) -
and) - BREL Swindon
Sept. 1)
Sept. 7 - Laira
Sept.15 - Old Oak Common
Sept.21 - Landore

Bristol Area:

Steam Excursions:

Bristol T.M. - Wapping Wharf (dates to be announced)
Bristol T.M. - Portshhead (" " " ")

G.W. Lecture:

"The Royal Road-150 Years of Enterprize"
by P. Rees ex-Chief Civil Engineer W.R.

April 24 - Brunel University, Uxbridge
May 22 - Reading University
MaY ? - Oxford University

Great Western Society:

Didcot Gala May 18th to June 2nd inclusive.
Open daily with steamings every day.
Visiting locomotives include 3217 "Earl of Berkley",
the Bluebell's "Dukedog" 4-4-0.

Renamings & Special Liveries:

At least 12 class 37,47 and 50 locos to receive
"names connected with the GWR, many receiving GW
green livery. Several passenger cars, and possibly
d.m.u's, will get GW chocolate and cream for special
services.

M&DRS and GW150

The Society hope to participate in several GW150 events.

At Easter we hope to form a party to visit Devon. This will be by car or minibus, depending on response, and will permit lineside photography of the April 7th and 8th SLOA "Pullmans" double headed over the legendary South Devon banks by 6000 "King George V" and 7819 "Hinton Manor". Both Dart Valley and Torbay & Dartmouth Railways will also be visited.

Details of this from Mike Walker, Marlow 3899.

M&DRS and GWR150 - continued

Our annual summer trip will be on July 21st to David Shepherd's East Somerset Railway and Longleat Safari Park. Foster Yeoman's Merehead quarry will also be visited.

It is also proposed to attend the Swindon Exhibition, hopefully combining the visit with a steam trip to Cheltenham, and possibly ride the Bristol steam specials. A club run on one of the later "SLOA Pullmans" to Plymouth may be arranged if the fare is lower than the £40 quoted for the Easter trips.

BRITAIN'S FIRST GAS-TURBINES

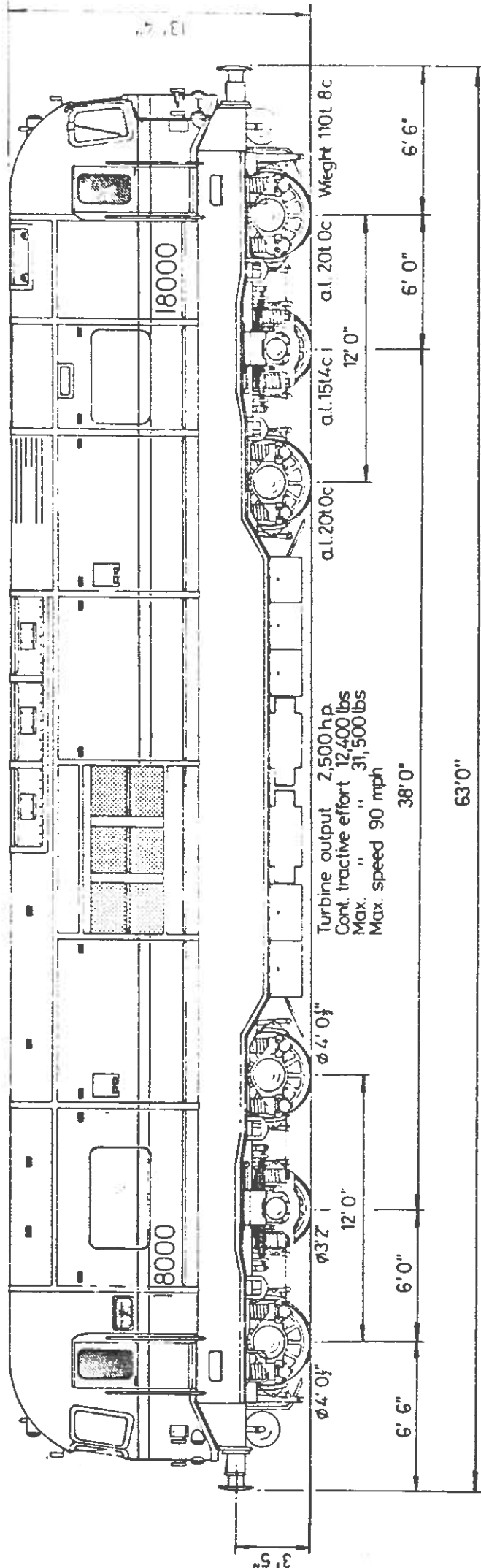
by Mike Walker

As World War 2 drew to a close the thoughts of all four main line companies turned to alternatives to steam traction. The LMS work for diesels whilst both the SR and LNER looked to both main line electrification and diesels (the LNER diesels were cancelled by BR). In line with its tradition of being different, the Great Western investigated the possibilities of gas-turbine-electric traction.

At this time only one gas-turbine locomotive had been built. This was Swiss Federal 1101, a 93 tonne 2,250 hp, 1A+Bo+A1, built by Brown-Boveri and Swiss Locomotive & Machine in 1941. So, just as Churchward looked to France for the prototype of his 4 cylinder locomotives, forty years later Hawkesworth went to Switzerland in early 1946 and placed an order with Brown-Boveri/SLM for one locomotive. This was to be a 110 ton 2,500 hp A1A-A1A, turbines and electrics were by Brown-Boveri whilst SLM provided the running gear and superstructure, designed in conjunction with Swindon. Technical details are shown in the accompanying drawing. In addition to the main turbine power plant the locomotive also carried a 6 cylinder diesel-generator set which was used for battery charging, turbine starting and could power two traction motors to enable light engine movements to be made without using the turbine.

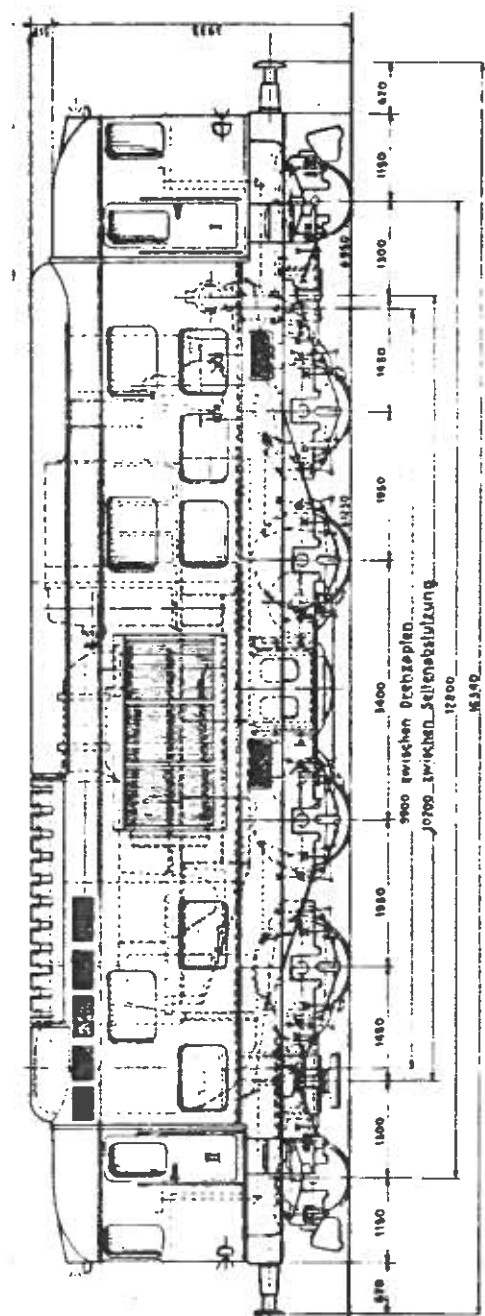
Ordered as the World's second turbine, it was beaten into operation by a General Electric prototype built in November 1948 which served on the Union Pacific. The GW unit started running trials in Switzerland in the summer of 1949. As vacuum brakes were fitted, SBB provided either 1101 or an electric locomotive to provide train air brakes. With both Swiss and British engineers satisfied, the locomotive, now numbered 18000, was shipped, arriving at Harwich on 3rd February 1950 whence it was hauled dead to Swindon. After further trials it was accepted into BR stock on 9th May. Following running in on Swindon to Paddington passenger turns it went into regular express passenger service between Paddington and Plymouth or Bristol from the end of May. It was regarded as the equal of a "King" and was dubbed "Kerosine Castle" by crews, its distinctive jet like roar announcing its approach. The original livery was black with polished aluminium numbers and a white band, however, by 1957 it had received standard green with orange and black lining out.

A second gas-turbine was ordered in late 1946 from British builder Metropolitan-Vickers. Having no previous experience construction took longer, delivery being made on 16th December 1951 and acceptance into stock the following April. Numbered 18100, this was a 130 ton Co-Co capable of producing 3,000 hp, making it Britain's most powerful locomotive until the prototype "Deltic" diesel of 1955.



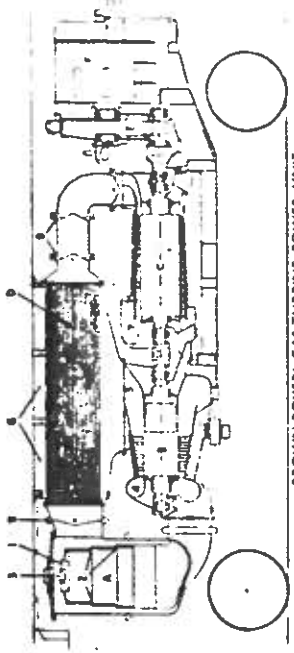
BR (WR) Gas-turbine-electric 18000

built 1949 by Brown-Boveri 4559 Swiss Locomotive & Machine 3977



SBB-CFF-FFS Gas-turbine-electric 1101

Operational Gas-Turbine Locomotives



BROWN-BOVERI GAS-TURBINE POWER UNIT

The power unit consists of combustion chamber (A); 7-stage turbine (B); 18-stage compressor (C) with a compression ratio of 1 : 4; air pre-heater or heat-exchanger (D); turbine, compressor and output shaft are direct-connected and rotate at the same speed, and the final drive from the power unit is through the reduction gear set (E) to the generator (F). At full load the speed of the turbine is 3,800 r.p.m. and of the generator 875 r.p.m., a ratio of 6.67 : 1.

Air is drawn in through the lubricating oil radiators on each side of the locomotive and it (7) enters the 18-stage compressor (C), from which after compression it flows to the combustion chamber (A), where it is then sent to the combustion chamber (A), partly as "cooling air" through the swirl vanes (I) and partly as "cooling air" through the slots (2). The "cooling air" mixes with the fuel, which is injected into the injection nozzle (3) to form a combustible mixture in turn mix with the "cooling air" in the lower part of the combustion chamber before it (4) enters the stage turbine (B). After expansion in the turbine the exhaust gases, which are still hot, pass through the pre-heater (D) and are then exhausted in the smoke pipe through slots (6) in the roof. The air after the several expansion joints (6) to allow for the expansion of the gas turbine and the heat pre-heater at 5,800 r.p.m. enters the turbine (B) through the slots (5) at 2,900 r.p.m. Of this the compressor absorbs 1,000 r.p.m. (7,900 r.p.m.) leaving 2,900 r.p.m. (7,935 r.p.m.) for the generator for traction.

BRITAIN'S FIRST GAS-TURBINES - continued

18100 operated alongside 18000 and both were reasonably successful. The actual turbines gave little trouble, most problems appear to have centered around auxiliary equipment. However, the gas-turbine was found to be unsuited to the kind of operation encountered on BR with frequent starting and stopping, and constantly changing speed. This led to inefficient combustion and high fuel consumption compared with a diesel. A gas-turbine is at its most efficient when working at a constant speed. Hence its success in marine and aviation applications. Only the Union Pacific with its heavy continuous drags made great use of gas-turbines and they were defeated by economics as super-power diesels appeared.

18100 was retired in 1958 and rebuilt as Britain's first 25kV 50Hz straight electric, E1000 (later E2001), for crew training on the LMR then retired again in 1968. Following static pantograph wind deflection tests at Grendon Underwood, it was scrapped in 1972.

18000 lasted with the WR until early 1960 when it was withdrawn and sold to the UIC (International Union of Railways) and shipped back to Switzerland. SBB rebuilt her in 1965 as a mobile laboratory conducting adhesion tests in Switzerland, West Germany and France, based at SBB's Erstfeld depot where it was known as "Elizabetha". Retired in 1980 it is now on display outside the UIC test centre in Vienna.

The GW turbines were a bold experiment but became an evolutionary dead end. The only other British turbines were English Electric's coal burning GT3 of 1961 and the APT-E which use automotive gas turbines. There was also a still born scheme to repower a "Blue Pullman" with Rolls-Royce Dart aero engines. In these cost conscience days there are unlikely to be others.

EIGHTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Eighth Annual General Meeting will be held at the Chequers on Thursday 17th January 1985.

Committee members, Roger Bowen, Roger Woodham and Mike Walker will be standing down in accordance with the rules. Mike Walker and Roger Bowen are willing to stand for re-election. In addition, although not due to stand down, Roy Mee wishes to retire from the committee due to other commitments.

Nominations are therefore invited for the two vacant positions on the Committee, including a new post of Publicity Officer. Nominations should be submitted in writing to the Secretary at 9, Wessex Gardens, Twyford, Reading, RG10 0BA to arrive no later than January 10th 1985.

The Agenda for the meeting is as follows:-

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the Seventh A.G.M. held on January 19th 1984.
3. Matters arising
4. Chairmans report
5. Treasurers report

EIGHTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - continued

6. Review of subscription rates
7. Norman Aston-Smith Trophy
8. Announcement of Events in 1985 by the Secretary
9. Items for general discussion
10. Election of Committee Members

The "Norman Aston-Smith Trophy" is an award for the best article in the previous year's "Marlow Donkey". It consists of a GW signal arm, kept at Fawley, and a £10 Book Token.

PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

This will be held in conjunction with A.G.M. Entries should be handed to a member of the Committee by 20.00 on the night. Slides should carry the entrants name but prints are to be unmarked.

There are two classes, prints (black and white or colour) and slides. General rules are as follows:-

1. A maximum of 6 entries in each class per member.
2. All entries must have been taken by the entrant.
3. There is no time limit-shots taken in 1920 or 1984 are eligible if taken by the entrant.
4. All entries must have a railway theme.

Judging will be by ballot of all those present. A £5 Book Token will be awarded to each class winner with small 2nd and 3rd prizes. Please support this new event and, even if you don't, bring a pen to vote with!

MEETINGS PROGRAMME TO APRIL 1985

<u>December 20th</u>	<u>"CHRISTMAS FILM SHOW FROM THE SCIENCE MUSEUM ARCHIVES"</u> Tony Hall-Patch, Assistant Keeper of Railways at the Science Museum, returns to show some more films following his visit two years ago. The programme includes "Men of Steam", a John Betjeman film about the GWR, and "Train Time" a general review of British Railways in 1950.
<u>January 17th</u>	<u>ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING and PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION</u> See seperate details.
<u>February 21st</u>	<u>"BIG BOYS, GALLOPING GEESE AND THE GREAT WESTERN"</u> Mike Walker, assisted by Charlie Smith, Pete Greatorex and John Sears, presents an illustrated talk on their 1984 visit to Colorado, Arizona and Wyoming. If you are puzzled by the title, all will be revealed on the night.
<u>March 21st</u>	<u>"RAILWAY WORLD PRODUCTION"</u> Michael Harris, Editorial Director of Ian Allan, describes the production of "Railway World" and associated railway publications. (To be confirmed).

MEETINGS PROGRAMME TO APRIL 1985 - continued

April 18th

"RAILWAY PRESERVATION"

David Shepherd, the world famous artist and steam preservationist. With the Society's summer outing planned to visit the East Somerset Railway, David Shepherd presents his own personal view of railway preservation with some emphasis on the ESR. The meeting will undoubtedly be popular, so come early, and the show starts at 19.30.

All meetings will be held in the Gainsborough Suite of the Chequers, High Street, Marlow commencing at 20.00. EXCEPT THE APRIL MEETING which starts half an hour earlier at 19.30.

